

4.0 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cumulative impacts refer to the combined effects of project impacts with the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. Both the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the *State CEQA Guidelines* require that cumulative impacts be analyzed in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). As set forth in the *State CEQA Guidelines*,¹ the discussion of cumulative impacts must reflect the severity of the impacts, as well as the likelihood of their occurrence; however, the discussion need not be as detailed as the discussion of environmental impacts attributable to the project alone. As stated in CEQA, “a project may have a significant effect on the environment if the possible effects of a project are individually limited but cumulatively considerable.”²

According to the *State CEQA Guidelines*,

“Cumulative impacts” refer to two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable and which compound or increase other environmental impacts.

- (a) The individual effects may be changes resulting from a single project or a number of separate projects.*
- (b) The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment, which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonable foreseeable probable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.*³

In addition, the *State CEQA Guidelines* require

Either:

A list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside control of the agency, or

A summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document, or in a prior environmental document which has been adopted or certified, which described or evaluated regional or areawide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact. Any such

¹ California Public Resources Code, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 15130(b).

² California Public Resources Code, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 21083(b).

³ California Public Resources Code, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 15355.

*planning document shall be referenced and made available to the public at a location specified by the lead agency.*⁴

CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

The list method is based on a list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related cumulative impacts. Where the list method is utilized, the contents of the list are dictated by the nature of the environmental resources being examined, as well as the location and type of project considered for inclusion in the list.⁵ The geographic scope of the area used for this cumulative effect analysis is defined and explained below.⁶ This EIR utilizes the list method to analyze potential cumulative impacts in the resource categories.

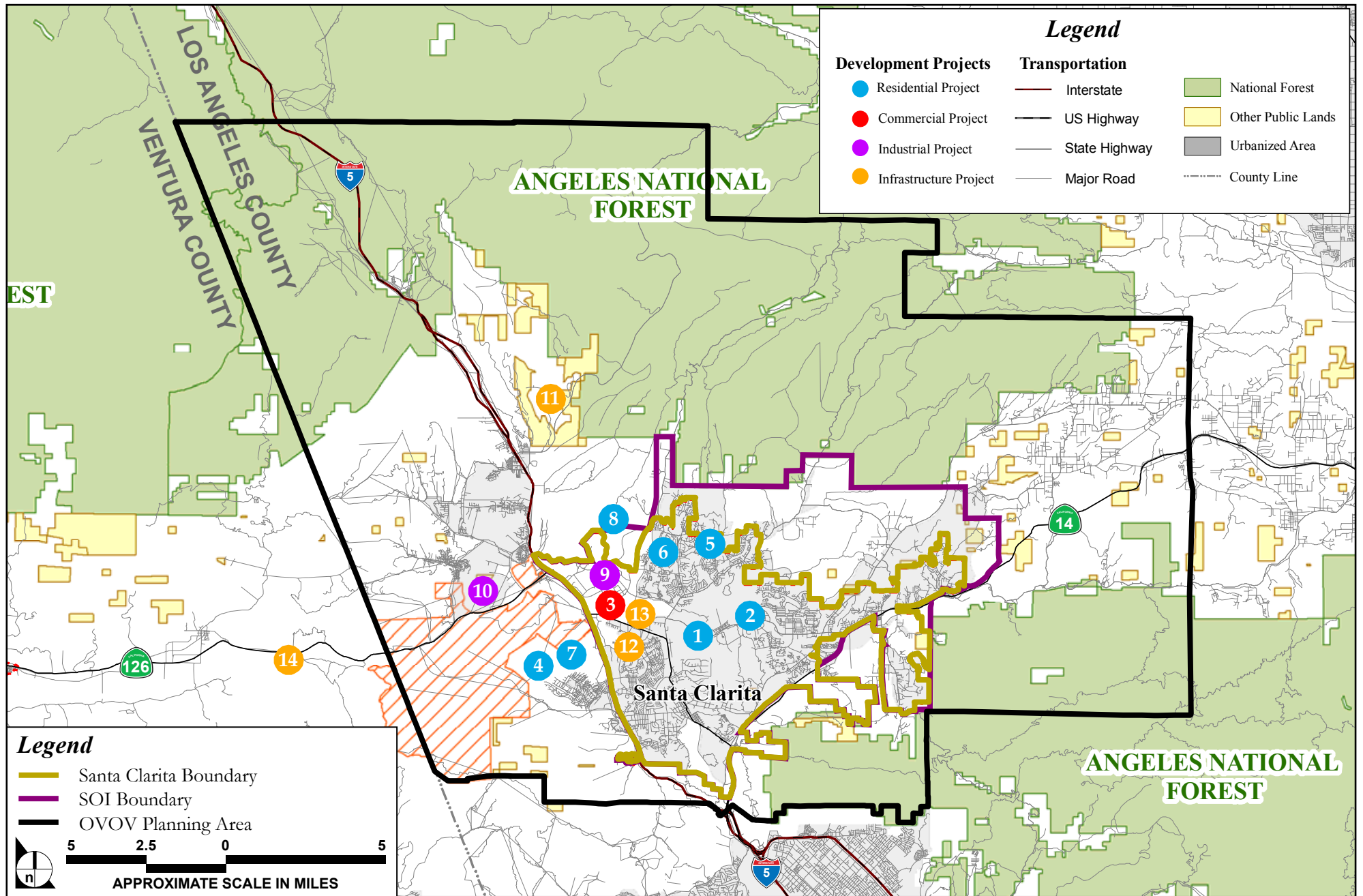
The preparation of this cumulative impacts analysis included the consideration of Los Angeles County and City of Santa Clarita land development projects and Caltrans highway projects. For local land development, infrastructure, and highway projects (projects of the type more common to cumulative impacts analyses generally) the approach to cumulative impacts analysis was dictated by the magnitude of the proposed Area Plan and the proximity of cumulative projects to the One Valley One Vision (OVOV) Planning Area. The proposed Area Plan covers approximately 276,906 acres. Small- to moderate-sized projects would not have impacts that are similar in magnitude to the proposed Area Plan, and thus, those projects are discussed in a consolidated manner. Similarly, projects located far away from the OVOV Planning Area would generally be unlikely to have impacts that would cumulate with those of the proposed Area Plan. The consolidated analysis is provided below. The consolidated projects are grouped according to the following jurisdictions: unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County and the City of Santa Clarita.

In order to present a reasonable cumulative impacts analysis, the local development, infrastructure, and highway projects lists were reduced and consolidated according to the following parameters: (1) projects outside the geographic scope (described below), and (2) projects within the OVOV Planning Area were reviewed and were identified on a map for ease of reference, **Figure 4.0-1, Cumulative Individual Project Location Map**.

⁴ California Public Resources Code, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 15130(a)(1).

⁵ California Code Regulations, Title 14, Section 15130(b)(2).

⁶ California Code Regulations, Title 14, Section 15130(b)(3).



SOURCE: Impact Sciences, Inc., Newhall Ranch Resource Management and Development Plan and the Spineflower Conservation Plan EIR/EIS - May 2009.

FIGURE 4.0-1

Cumulative Individual Project Location Map

The geographic scope of the cumulative impacts analysis for most resource areas is shown on **Figure 4.0-1.**⁷ Under Section 15130 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*, the lead agency should provide a reasonable explanation of the geographic limitation used in the cumulative impacts analysis. For each resource area, the analysis determined the area that would be affected by the project, determined the resources within that area that could be affected by the proposed Area Plan, and determined the reasonable geographic area occupied by those resources outside of the project impact zone that should be considered for cumulative impact purposes.

Some of the proposed Area Plan effects are localized or site-specific in nature and do not contribute to cumulative impacts (e.g., geologic hazards). Other effects of the proposed Area Plan potentially contribute to cumulative impact conditions, including impacts on air quality, biological resources, wetlands, hydrology, traffic, groundwater quality and supply, surface water quality, land use, and visual resources. The geographic scope used to generate the list of past, present, and probable future projects is based on the characteristics of these various resource areas and concepts of reasonableness. For the purposes of this cumulative analysis, those projects within the OVOV Planning Area boundary or adjacent to its boundary were included in the analysis. These projects would have the greatest potential to result in impacts that could compound or increase impacts in conjunction with the proposed Area Plan.⁸

Cumulative Impact Analysis Study Area

The County's Planning Area consists of unincorporated land outside the City's boundaries and adopted Sphere of Influence (SOI) but within the OVOV Planning Area boundaries. The City's Planning Area consists of its incorporated boundaries and adopted SOI. Both the County and City Planning Areas comprise the OVOV Planning Area. The OVOV Planning Area is located in Southern California in the northern portion of Los Angeles County (North County) (**Figure 2.0-1, Regional Location Map**, and **Figure 2.0-2, Vicinity Map**). It is situated at the convergence of Los Angeles and Ventura counties, approximately 35 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles. The OVOV Planning Area includes the County communities of Stevenson Ranch, Castaic, Val Verde, Agua Dulce, and the future Newhall Ranch and the City and its four communities Canyon Country, Newhall, Saugus, and Valencia (**Figure 2.0-3, Community Locations.**)

⁷ This scope was used for analysis of the following resource categories: Hydrology, Water Quality, Cultural Resources, Paleontological Resources, Geology and Soils, Land Use and Planning, Aesthetics, Parks and Recreation, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Public Services, , and Utilities - Solid Waste.

⁸ Impact Sciences, Inc., *Newhall Ranch Resource Management and Development Plan and the Spineflower Conservation Plan EIR/EIS*, 2009.

Several mountain ranges frame the OVOV Planning Area boundary including the San Gabriel Mountains, Santa Susana Mountains, and the Sierra Pelona Mountains. At its western most edge, the OVOV Planning Area extends from a point south of Pyramid Lake on the Ventura County border southeast to Oat Mountain and extends into the Angeles National Forest to the east. The easternmost boundary includes the community of Agua Dulce. From this point, it continues to the northwest, parallel to the southern boundary of the City of Palmdale through the Angeles National Forest, and proceeds northward approximately 5 miles north of the uppermost portion of Castaic Lake. In addition to the major ridgelines forming the boundaries of the Valley, prominent scenic resources include the Santa Clara River Valley, creeks, canyons, and forestlands. The Angeles National Forest surrounds much of the OVOV Planning Area to the south and the north (**Figure 2.0-2**).

Unincorporated Los Angeles County Consolidated Projects

Table 4.0-1, North Los Angeles County Consolidated Projects, contains the Los Angeles County consolidated projects analysis.

City of Santa Clarita Consolidated Projects

Table 4.0-2, City of Santa Clarita Consolidated Projects, contains the City of Santa Clarita consolidated projects analysis.

Table 4.0-1
North Los Angeles County Consolidated Projects

| Name | Location | Units | Commercial/ Industrial (sf) ¹ | Acres ² | Status |
|--|--|-------|---|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Residential/Mixed Use Projects | | | | | |
| Fair Oaks Ranch (TR 47200, 52833, 52938) | East of SR-14, northeast of Via Princessa, and west of Sand Canyon Road | 1,476 | 19 acres [827,640 sf] | 839 (497 open space) | Under Construction |
| Stevenson Ranch Phase IV (PD #2528; TR 52796, 43896) | West of I-5 and southwest of Magic Mountain Parkway. | 1,130 | 0 | 488 (113 open space) | Built Out |
| Plum Canyon (TR 46018) | East of Bouquet Canyon Road and north of the northern terminus of Whites Canyon Road. | 4,051 | 150,000 | 603 | Under Construction |
| Skyline Ranch (TR 060922) | East of Whites Canyon Road, west of Sierra Highway | 1,325 | 0 | 2,196 (1,604 open space) | Pending |
| Plum Canyon (SunCal) (TR 31803) | South of Plum Canyon Road, east of Bouquet Canyon Road | 499 | 0 | 209 (90 open space) | Under Construction |
| Legacy Village (formerly Stevenson Ranch V) | Map ID #1 - Adjacent to/southeast of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan area. | 3,425 | 840,200 | 1,759 | Pre-Application |
| Tesoro del Valle (TR 51644) | Map ID #2 - West side of San Francisquito Creek, north of Copperhill Drive. | 1,791 | 0 | 1,793 | Under Construction |
| West Creek/West Hills Valencia Project (TR 52445) | Map ID #3 - West side of San Francisquito Creek, north of Newhall Ranch Road and south of the Copperhill Drive bridge | 2,545 | 180,000 | 966 | Under Construction |
| Westridge Project (TR 45433 & MP 19050) | Map ID #4 - Just west of I-5, north of Stevenson Ranch, and directly south of Six Flags Magic Mountain Amusement Park | 1,939 | 192,000 | 794 | Under Construction |
| Northlake (TR 51852) | Near Castaic Lake | 1,698 | 388,775 | 1,330 (312 open space) | Pending |
| Tapia Ranch (TR 53822) | Map ID #5 - Tapia Canyon Road, west of Tesoro Residential Development. Access to the site currently <i>via</i> Parker Road exit from I-5 | 405 | 0 | 1167 | Pending |

4.0 Cumulative Scenario

| Name | Location | Units | Commercial/ Industrial (sf) ¹ | Acres ² | Status |
|---|--|-------|---|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Spring Canyon (TR 48086) | East of City of Santa Clarita boundary, south of Sierra Highway, north of SR-14 and Soledad Canyon Road | 542 | 0 | 548 (279 open space) | Approved |
| Bee Canyon (TR 54020) | East of City of Santa Clarita boundary, south of SR-14. | 556 | 0 | 211 (76 open space) | On Hold |
| Tick Canyon/Park Place (TR 060259) | Along Shadow Pines Boulevard just east of City of Santa Clarita boundary, north of Stonecrest Annexation area and SR-14 | 492 | 0 | 523 (272 open space) | Pending |
| Hasley Golf Course (TR 52584) | North of Hasley Canyon Road, west of I-5 | 209 | 0 | 438 (67 open space) | Approved |
| Meadow Peak Project (TT 47760) | South of the Angeles National Forest, north of the City of Santa Clarita boundary, and northeast of the intersection of Copperhill Drive and Haskell Canyon Road | 495 | 0 | 454 | Pending |
| Tincher (TR 060319) | Located at The Old Road and Villa Canyon Road | 36 | 0 | 8 | Pending |
| G. H. Palmer and Associates (TR 45023) | North of Fair Oaks Ranch, east of SR-14 | 752 | 0 | 8 | Map Recorded |
| North Park (TR 46389) | West of Seco Canyon Road, east of Mc Bean Parkway, north of Decoro Drive | 744 | 0 | 350 | Map Recorded |
| Pacific Bay Homes (TR 36943) | East of City of Santa Clarita boundary and Stonecrest Annexation area, north of Highway 14 | 636 | 0 | 213 | Completed |
| Stevenson Ranch III (TR 33608) | North of Pico Canyon Road, west of The Old Road | 972 | 0 | 112 | Built Out |
| Fair Oaks Ranch (TR 44492) | East of Sierra Highway, north of Via Princesa | 634 | 0 | 37 | Map Recorded |

| Name | Location | Units | Commercial/ Industrial (sf) ¹ | Acres ² | Status |
|--|---|-------|---|------------------------|---------------------|
| Centex Homes Bouquet Canyon (TR 46908) | South of the Angeles National Forest, north of Copperhill Drive, west of the Meadow Peak project | 594 | 0 | 381 | Completed |
| Ion Communities, Castaic (Tract 46443) | West of I-5 in Castaic | 95 | 0 | 159 | Pending |
| Johannes Van Tiburge (TR 43570) | West of I-5, east of Hasley Golf Course | 540 | 0 | 8 | Map Recorded |
| Curtis Development Corporation (TR 47657) | North of Haskell Canyon Road and Copperhill Drive | 223 | 0 | 63 | Map Recorded |
| G. H. Palmer and Associates (TR 45287) | On Sandy Drive and Jakes Way, between Sierra Highway and SR-14, south of the Santa Clara River | 463 | 0 | 23 | Map Recorded |
| Davidon Homes (TR 35783) | North of Copperhill Drive and east of Seco Canyon Road | 419 | 0 | 149 | Map Recorded |
| Green Valley Ranch Residential (TR 62000, 60257, and 062275) | Located south of Del Valle Road near Cromwell Avenue. The property is located approximately one-half mile west of the intersection of Hasley Canyon Road and Del Valle Road, and approximately one and one-half miles north of SR-126 | 233 | 30,000 | 224 (25 open space) | Pending Approval |
| Newhall Land (TR 44429) | Along Ridge Route Road, east of I-5 in Castaic | 293 | 0 | 113 | Map Recorded |
| Valencia Company (TR 48202) | Northeast corner of Decoro Drive and Copperhill Drive | 458 | 3.5 acres [152,460 sf] | 9 | Map Recorded |
| Valencia Company (TR 45084) | Corner of Commerce Center Drive and Hasley Canyon Road | 294 | 0 | 150 | Completed |
| Valencia Company (TR 36668) | West of The Old Road, north of Commerce Center Drive | 359 | one lot | 134 | Completed |

| Name | Location | Units | Commercial/ Industrial (sf) ¹ | Acres ² | Status |
|---|--|-------|---|------------------------|-----------------|
| Curtis Development Corporation (TR 45958) | West of I-5 in Castaic | 296 | 0 | 357 | Map Recorded |
| Gerald Nordeman (TR 44373) | Along Hillcrest Parkway, west of I-5, north of Hasley Golf Course | 1,114 | 4 acres [174,240 sf] | 376 | Map Recorded |
| Vista Canyon Ranch | Along Lost Canyon Road and the Santa Clara River, east of the Fair Oaks Ranch community, south of the 14 Freeway and west of Sand Canyon Road | 1,600 | 1,500,000 | 217 (80 open space) | Pending |
| Davidon Homes (TR 46183) | West of Haskell Canyon Road, north of Copperhill Drive | 213 | 0 | 80 | Completed |
| Forest Edge Project (Western Pacific Housing, TR 51789) | West of Haskell Canyon Road, north of Copperhill Drive | 194 | 0 | 79 (30 open space) | Map Recorded |
| Bouquet Canyon Land Fund 8, LLC (TR 52193) | Located west of Bouquet Canyon Road near the intersection of Bouquet and Vasquez Canyon Road | 179 | 20,000 | 260 | Pending |
| Westshire (Pardee Homes, TR 063483) | Located immediately south of SR-14, southwest of Via Princessa and north of Lost Canyon Road | 190 | 0 | 13 (3 open space) | Pending |
| Overland National Land Fund (TR 52192) | Southwest of the intersection of Bouquet Canyon Road and Vasquez Canyon Road | 155 | 0 | 204 | Pending |
| Condo III Development, Larwin Company, Val Verde (TR 51995) | West of I-5, south of Hillcrest Parkway | 114 | 0 | 15 | Map Recorded |
| Forecast Homes (TR 46353) | Located in Mint Canyon just southeast of Sierra Highway and west of Sand Canyon Road, just north of the City of Santa Clarita boundary | 110 | 0 | 65 | Map Recorded |
| Golden Valley Ranch (TR 52535) | West of I-5 in Castaic | 80 | 0 | 260 | Pending |
| Decoro Drive Residential (TR 45440) | West of McBean, east of San Francisquito Creek | 182 | 0 | 99 | Completed |

4.0 Cumulative Scenario

| Name | Location | Units | Commercial/ Industrial (sf) ¹ | Acres ² | Status |
|---|--|---------------|---|--------------------|--------------|
| Dierckman & Mayh (PM 19784) | West of Commerce Center Drive, north of SR-126 | 115 | 0 | 288 | Map Recorded |
| (TR 42537) | West of I-5 in Castaic | 95 | 0 | 553 | Approved |
| Sierra Way Estates (TR 47573) | Located northeast of the intersection of Sierra Highway and Vasquez Canyon Road | 75 | 0 | 246 | Pending |
| (TR 47807) | West of Sloan Canyon Road and I-5 in Castaic | 77 | 0 | 197 | Approved |
| SunCal Burnam Project (TR 53189) | Along San Francisquito Creek, west of McBean Parkway and north of Copperhill Drive | 60 | 0 | 186 | Pending |
| Hasley Ranch Co. Greystone Homes Inc. (TR 45645) | Hasley Canyon Road and Romero Canyon Road, west of the Hasley Canyon Golf Course and I-5 | 67 | 0 | 160 | Approved |
| Arciero and Sons, Inc. (TR 53725) | West of Hasley Canyon Golf Course and I-5 | 42 | 0 | 139 | Pending |
| Del Valle Project (TR 060665) | South of Hasley Canyon Golf Course | 111 | 0 | 134 | Pending |
| Tract 52475 | North of Hasley Canyon Road, west of Del Valle Road | 46 | 0 | 70 | Pending |
| Sterling Gateway (TR 60030) | Located east of Chiquita Canyon Road, just north of the Project area | 21 | 1,300,000 | 108 | Pending |
| Total Los Angeles County Residential/Mixed Use | | 42,659 | 5,755,315 | 30,413 | |

| Name | Location | Units | Commercial/ Industrial (sf) ¹ | Acres ² | Status |
|--|--|----------|---|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Industrial/Commercial Projects | | | | | |
| Castaic Junction (PM 26574) | North of Henry Mayo Drive, west of The Old Road, north of the I-5 and SR-126 interchange | 0 | 1,879,500 | 114 | Under Construction |
| Valencia Industrial Center | Map ID #6 - East of I-5, south of Newhall Ranch Road, north of Magic Mountain Parkway | 0 | 12,900,000 | 1,840 | Approved |
| PM 18654 | Northwest of The Old Road and Magic Mountain Parkway, near Six Flags Magic Mountain Amusement Park | 0 | 200,000 | 9 | Approved |
| Curtis Sand and Gravel Mine and Aggregate Plant | Upper Santa Clara River, about 10 miles upstream from Newhall Ranch Specific Plan area. | 0 | n/a | 185 | Operating since 1955 |
| Transit Mix (CEMEX) Soledad Canyon Mine | East of City of Santa Clarita boundary, at the entrance to Soledad Canyon | 0 | n/a | 300 | Suspended pending federal legislation |
| Chiquita Canyon Landfill Expansion | Map ID #7 - West of I-5, north of SR-126, at Henry Mayo Drive and Wolcott Drive | 0 | n/a | 98 | Pending |
| Industrial/Commercial Subtotal | | 0 | 14,879,500 | 2,546 | |
| Institutional Projects | | | | | |
| Castaic High School | North of Lake Hughes Road, east of Ridge Route Road | 0 | 500,000 | 50 | Pending |
| Total Los Angeles County Institutional | | 0 | 500,000 | 50 | |
| Infrastructure Projects | | | | | |
| CLWA Reclaimed Water Master Plan (Santa Clara River) | Map ID #8 - Los Angeles County and City of Santa Clarita | n/a | n/a | n/a | Pending |
| Bouquet Canyon Bridge Widening | Adding one lane in each direction on Bouquet Canyon Bridge at Santa Clara River | n/a | n/a | n/a | Completed |
| Copperhill Drive Bridge | Upper San Francisquito Creek, 565-foot bridge, six lanes | n/a | n/a | n/a | Completed |

4.0 Cumulative Scenario

| Name | Location | Units | Commercial/ Industrial (sf) ¹ | Acres ² | Status |
|---|--|-------|---|--------------------|---|
| Commerce Center Drive Extension | Extension of Commerce Center Drive and Bridge over Castaic Creek | n/a | n/a | n/a | Completed |
| Cross Valley Connector | Two-mile extension of Newhall Ranch Road to east of Bouquet Canyon Road, including approximately 120-foot-wide bridge over Santa Clara River, connecting with Golden Valley Road. | n/a | n/a | n/a | Approved; estimated completion 2008 |
| Santa Clarita Valley Joint Sewerage Facilities Plan | Map ID #9 - Los Angeles County. | n/a | n/a | n/a | Approved |
| DPW Channel maintenance (South Fork) | 70 acres of channel excavation, center of Santa Clara River, South Fork. | n/a | n/a | n/a | Provisional Corps permit in 1997 |
| Natural River Management Plan (NRMP) | Map ID #10 - Natural River Management Plan for 1,200 acres along the Santa Clara River. | n/a | n/a | n/a | Approved in 1998; half built-out |
| Santa Clara River Enhancement and Management Plan | Map ID #11 - Santa Clara River from Acton to Pacific Ocean, in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. | n/a | n/a | n/a | Approved |
| I-5 and SR-126 | I-5/SR-126 interchange | n/a | n/a | n/a | Completed |
| I-5/Hasley Canyon Road | Within Valencia Commerce Center, I-5 at the I-5/Hasley Canyon Road interchange | n/a | n/a | n/a | Under Construction since 10/07 |
| I-5/Magic Mountain Parkway Interchange Project | Modify the I-5/Magic Mountain Parkway interchange, reconstruct the Santa Clara River Bridge, realign The Old Road, and realign and widen Magic Mountain Parkway from six to eight lanes; | n/a | n/a | n/a | Construction scheduled to be complete Spring 2009 |
| Valencia Water Reclamation Plant | Immediately downstream of the I-5 bridge, discharges to the Santa Clara River | n/a | n/a | n/a | Completed |

4.0 Cumulative Scenario

| Name | Location | Units | Commercial/ Industrial (sf) ¹ | Acres ² | Status |
|---|--|---------------|---|--------------------|---|
| I-5 Santa Clara River Bridge Replacement | Santa Clara River and I-5 | n/a | n/a | n/a | Completed |
| Castaic Junction Project | I-5/SR-126 interchange improvement project | n/a | n/a | n/a | Under Construction |
| Soledad Canyon Road Trail (Santa Clara River) | South side of Santa Clara River from Metro Link Station to west side of Bouquet Canyon Bridge, continuing along the west side of Valencia Boulevard across South Fork at the Valencia Bridge | n/a | n/a | n/a | Pending |
| Infrastructure Subtotal | | n/a | n/a | n/a | |
| Total | | 65,659 | 21,134,815 | 44,709 | (includes at least 3,627 acres of open space) |

Note: The Las Lomas Project (PM 060792) application was denied, and thus, it was not included in this list because it is currently not reasonably foreseeable.

¹ *In some instances, commercial/industrial square footage was not available but an acreage for such uses was provided. That acreage was converted to square footage [shown in brackets] to provide an estimated basis for aggregating square footage totals.*

² *Open space acreage information was not available for all projects, but is provided where available.*

Source: Impact Sciences, Inc., Newhall Ranch Resource Management and Development Plan and the Spineflower Conservation Plan EIR/EIS, 2009.

**Table 4.0-2
City of Santa Clarita Consolidated Projects**

| Name | Location | Units | Commercial/ Industrial (sf) | Acres ¹ | Status |
|--|--|-------|--------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| Residential/Mixed Use Projects | | | | | |
| Golden Valley Ranch (TR 52414) | Newly annexed area southeast of SR-14 and north of Placerita Canyon Road | 498 | 618,759 | 1,259 (974 open space) | Approved 2002; Under Construction |
| Whittaker Bermite/Porta Bella Project (TR 51599) | Map ID #12 - West of Golden Valley Road, south of Soledad Canyon Road, and east of San Fernando Road. | 2,911 | 609,832 | 996 (407 open space) | On Hold Pending Remediation Activities and Bankruptcy Proceedings |
| River Park (TR 53425) | Map ID #13 - Located at the eastern terminus of Newhall Ranch Road, east of Bouquet Canyon Road, and north of Soledad Canyon Road and the Santa Clara River | 1,089 | 16,000 | 695 | Under Construction |
| North Valencia Specific Plan No. II (MC 04-205) | Two miles east of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan along the east side of San Francisquito Creek, north of Newhall Ranch Road, south of Decoro Drive, east of Rye Canyon Road, and west of McBean Parkway | 1,900 | 210,000 | 596 | Approved 2000; Near Build-out |
| Keystone/Synergy Project (TR 60258) | South of Bouquet Canyon Road, adjacent to the RiverPark project | 499 | 30,476 | 246 (137 open space) | Approved 2006 |
| Stonecrest Annexation | Annexation of existing developed area on the far east side of the City of Santa Clarita, north of Soledad Canyon Road, and east of Shadow Pines Boulevard. | 631 | 0 | 427 | Annexed 2006; Existing Development |
| Downtown Newhall Specific Plan | Redevelopment of downtown Newhall area (along San Fernando Road) | 1,092 | 1,017,000 | 320 | Approved |

| Name | Location | Units | Commercial/ Industrial (sf) | Acres ¹ | Status |
|--|--|---------------|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| North Newhall Specific Plan | Redevelopment along San Fernando Road in Newhall | 673 | 660,500 (Comm.) 261,000 (Elem. School) | 213 | Pending |
| Lyons Ranch (TR 53653) | West of I-5 and south of Pico Canyon Road | 186 | 800 | 235 | Approved |
| Stetson Ranch (TR 49621) | East of Sand Canyon Road at the northern terminus of Gary and Marilyn Drives | 265 | 0 | 176 | Approved |
| Sand Canyon Joint Venture (TT 53255, 53074) | The northeast corner of Soledad Canyon Road and Sand Canyon Road | 87 | 110,000 | 89 | Approved |
| DR Horton (TR 48892) | Northeast corner of Sierra Highway and Golden Valley Road | 148 | 0 | 61 | Approved |
| Centex Homes (TR 61811) | Located north of Golden Valley Road, west of Sierra Highway | 52 | 0 | 14 | Under Construction |
| Soledad Village Project (MC 04-444) | North of Soledad Canyon Road, south of Santa Clara River, approximately 1 mile east of Bouquet Canyon Road | 407 | 8,000 | 30 | Approved 2006 |
| Friendly Valley Association 11 (TR 52385) | Generally located north of Sierra Highway and east of Via Princessa | 43 | 0 | 22 | Proposed |
| Valle de Oro (TR 53419) | Located at the northwest corner of Sierra Highway and Golden Valley Road | 111 | 0 | 21 | Completed |
| Soledad Circle Estates | South of Soledad Canyon Road at Penlon Court | 147 | 0 | 20 | Pending |
| Flying Tiger (TR 259166) | North of Via Princessa and east of Sierra Highway | 200 | 0 | 13 | Approved |
| Total Santa Clarita Residential/Mixed Use | | 10,939 | 3,542,367 | 5,433 | |

| Name | Location | Units | Commercial/ Industrial (sf) | Acres ¹ | Status |
|--|---|-------|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Commercial/Industrial Projects | | | | | |
| Rye Canyon Business Park (TR 23916, 51826) | At the northeast corner of Rye Canyon Road and Newhall Ranch Road | 0 | 4,400,000 | 376 | Under Construction |
| Gate King (TR 50283) | Southern Santa Clarita, west of SR-14 and Sierra Highway, south of San Fernando Road | 0 | 4,200,000 | 682 | Approved |
| Centre Pointe Business Park (TR 42670) | South of Soledad Canyon road, east of Bouquet Canyon Road, west of Golden Valley Road | 0 | 2,300,000 | 45 | Near Buildout |
| North Valencia Specific Plan No. I | Map ID #14 - South of Newhall Ranch Road, north of Magic Mountain Parkway, east of Rye Canyon Road, west of Bouquet Canyon Road | 2,000 | 803,000 | 707 (365 open space) | Near Buildout |
| Valencia Town Center Expansion | Northeast corner of Valencia Boulevard and McBean Parkway | 0 | 491,860 | 10 | Proposed |
| Bridgeport Market Place | Northeast corner of McBean Parkway and Newhall Ranch Road | 0 | 160,000 | 32 | Under Construction |
| Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Master Plan (MC 04-325) | 23845 West McBean Parkway | 0 | 600,000 | 21 | Proposed |
| Tourney North | Magic Mountain Parkway west of The Old Road and I-5 | 0 | 450,000 | 100 | Under Construction |
| Tourney South | Wayne Mills Place east of I-5 | 0 | 165,000 | 12 | Under Construction |
| Aspen Investment Company (MC 02-273) | North of Soledad Canyon Road and west of Valley Center Drive | 0 | 109,000 | 6 | Proposed |
| Chinque Terra Office Park | On Sierra Highway between Dockweiler Drive and San Fernando Road | 0 | 90,900 | 6 | Pending |
| Rice Self Storage (MC 02-231) | Southwest corner of Seco Canyon Road and Copperhill Drive | 0 | 84,000 | 3 | Completed |

| Name | Location | Units | Commercial/ Industrial (sf) | Acres ¹ | Status |
|---|---|--------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Facey Medical Building | 26357 McBean Parkway | 0 | 79,000 | 4 | Completed |
| HH Seco II LLC (MC 01-317) | Southwest corner of Seco Canyon Road and Copperhill Drive | 0 | 40,000 | 2 | Completed |
| VTC Square | Northwest corner of McBean Parkway and Valencia Boulevard | 10 | 37,000 | 1 | Pending |
| Rodgers Development Master Case 02-232 | Northeast corner of Bouquet Canyon Road and Plum Canyon Road | 0 | 34,000 | 4 | Completed |
| Total Santa Clarita Commercial/Industrial | | 2,010 | 14,043,760 | 2,011 | |
| Institutional Projects | | | | | |
| College of the Canyons Expansion | South of Valencia Boulevard and west of Rockwell Canyon Road | n/a | 180,000 | 5 | Pending |
| Master's College Master Plan and TM 66503 | 21726 Placerita Canyon Road | 54 | 0 | 95 | Pending |
| UCLA Film Archives | North of McBean Parkway and west of Rockwell Canyon Road | n/a | 368,730 | 65 | Pending |
| Total Santa Clarita Institutional | | 54 | 548,730 | 165 | |
| Infrastructure Projects | | | | | |
| Sand Canyon Road Bridge Widening | Tentative Tract Map No. 52004 filed with City of Santa Clarita, Robinson Ranch Golf Course project. Crosses the Santa Clara River where riverbed is dry. Two new lanes are proposed for an existing bridge. | n/a | n/a | n/a | Approved |
| Wiley Canyon Road/Via Princessa Bridge (South fork) | 1,100-foot bridge, crosses South Fork of Santa Clara River near City of Santa Clarita | n/a | n/a | n/a | Permitted |

| Name | Location | Units | Commercial/ Industrial (sf) | Acres ¹ | Status |
|--|---|---------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|---|
| Saugus Water Reclamation Plant | Near Bouquet Canyon Road, discharges to Santa Clara River | n/a | n/a | n/a | Completed |
| City of Santa Clarita General Plan Circulation Element Amendment, all watercourses | City of Santa Clarita. | n/a | n/a | n/a | City General Plan Circulation Element |
| Total Santa Clarita Infrastructure | | n/a | n/a | n/a | |
| Total Santa Clarita | | 13,003 | 18,134,857 | 7,609 | (includes at least 1,883 acres of open space) |

¹ Open space acreage information was not available for all projects, but is provided where available.

Source: Impact Sciences, Inc., Newhall Ranch Resource Management and Development Plan and the Spineflower Conservation Plan EIR/EIS, 2009.

Consolidated Projects Overview

Table 4.0-3 contains a summary of the consolidated project information from **Tables 4.0-1** and **4.0-2**, above.

Table 4.0-3
Summary of Total County/City/Caltrans Consolidated Projects

| Agency | Units | Comm./Ind. (sf)¹ | Total Acres/ Open Space Acres² |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|--|--|
| Santa Clarita | 13,003 | 18,134,857 | 7,609/1,883 |
| Unincorporated Los Angeles County | 65,659 | 21,134,815 | 44,709/3,627 |
| Total | 78,662 | 39,269,672 | 52,318/5,510 |

¹ Includes some instances where commercial/industrial acreages were converted to square footage [shown in brackets in **Tables 4.0-1** to **4.0-2**] to provide an estimated basis for aggregating square footage totals.

² Open space acreage information was not available for all projects; therefore, the "Open Space Acres" number represents the minimum open space that is planned for the projects in **Tables 4.0-1** to **4.0-2**.

Source: **Tables 4.0-1**, and **4.0-2**.

IMPACT ANALYSIS

This section includes discussions of potential cumulative impacts for each resource category analyzed in this EIR. For each resource category the analysis is structured as follows:

- Summary of potential impacts and mitigation for the proposed Area Plan
- Discussion of potential cumulative impacts
- Discussion of the incremental contribution of the proposed Area Plan to the cumulative impacts and whether that contribution is cumulatively considerable
- Discussion of cumulative mitigation measures, if needed
- Summary of cumulative impacts and mitigation

Due to the broad project objectives associated with the implementation of the proposed Area Plan, the cumulative analysis presented in this programmatic EIR does not evaluate the site-specific impacts of individual projects. Project-level analysis will be prepared by implementing agencies on a project-by-project basis. The proposed Area Plan addresses cumulative growth anticipated to occur in the OVOV Planning Area resulting from build out of the proposed Area Plan. Growth in neighboring counties and

cities would likely cause secondary effects in the OVOV Planning Area, such as increased regional population, traffic, housing, and pollution; therefore, this section will present the anticipated population growth of surrounding counties located within the South California Association of Governments (SCAG) planning region.

The cumulative impact analysis is based on the anticipated population growth within the OVOV Planning Area and surrounding SCAG region. Population growth is a major factor contributing to direct impacts on habitat, housing, job markets, transportation, and development. Additionally, these direct impacts can cause secondary impacts on biological resources, air quality, density, and the overall quality of life within the OVOV Planning Area. For this reason, using population growth as a measure to determine cumulative impacts is highly applicable when examining a large project area such as a county. It is important to note that to evaluate impacts, future conditions (without the project) are compared to existing conditions to identify cumulative impacts (i.e., impacts that would occur whether or not the project was implemented).

Implementation of the proposed Area Plan would provide a planning framework to channel and direct future population growth and development. Cumulative impacts relevant to specific issues are summarized as follows.

Cumulative Land Use

The proposed Area Plan does not physically divide an established community. The proposed land use map defines the areas of land uses and provides for consistency and transition for the County's Planning Area. CEQA does not require analysis of potential cumulative impacts where the proposed Area Plan itself does not result in any impacts.⁹ Therefore, no further analysis of cumulative impacts is required for potential land-use impacts.

Cumulative Transportation and Circulation Impacts

Buildout of the County's proposed Area Plan in place of the existing Area Plan would reduce traffic on the County's roadways, including those monitored by the Los Angeles County Congestion Management Program (CMP), and at principal intersections because buildout population of the proposed Area Plan would be smaller than that of the existing Area Plan. Implementation of the proposed Area Plan would not result in a change in air traffic patterns, substantially increase hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses, result in inadequate emergency access, or generate a parking demand that exceeds

⁹ 40 C.F.R. Section 1508.7; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, Section 15130, subd. (a)(1).

municipal code–required parking capacity. Furthermore, implementation of the proposed Area Plan would promote policies, plans, and programs supporting alternative transportation, and remove hazards and barriers to pedestrians and bicyclists. Therefore, traffic and circulation impacts would be less than significant.

As per CEQA, due to the impacts on transportation and circulation considered less than significant, then any cumulative impacts associated with implementation of the proposed Area Plan would be less than significant.

Cumulative Air Quality Impacts

Any past, present, or probable project that would individually have a significant air quality impact would also be considered to have a significant cumulative air quality impact. As specified in the *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, the ratio of a project’s vehicle miles traveled (VMT) or average daily trips (ADT) to anticipated VMT or ADT in the county or city in which the project is located is compared to the ratio of the project population to the anticipated population in the same county or city.¹⁰ If the growth of VMT or ADT is less than the population growth, then a project is not considered to have a significant cumulative air quality impact. **Section 3.3** of this EIR addresses the first significance threshold—whether the proposed policies would conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan, in an inherently cumulative fashion, because the conformity analysis takes into account all other basin emissions. That section concluded that the proposed Area Plan would have smaller growth of ADT when compared to population than does the existing Area Plan, which would not result in significant impacts under this threshold. Thus, the implementation of the proposed Area Plan also does not contribute to a significant cumulative impact with respect to implementation of the air quality plan.

The implementation of the proposed Area Plan would potentially increase mobile and stationary source emissions of pollutants that currently exceed state and/or federal standards, and for which the project region is nonattainment. Therefore, air quality emissions would have a potentially significant cumulative impact.

The implementation of the Area Plan would be designed to reduce emissions of toxic air contaminants (TACs) and the potential for CO hotspots, as well as reducing potential to exposure to TACs by sensitive receptors, and odor impacts associated with the proposed Area Plan, however not to a level of less than significant. As per CEQA, since impacts on project air quality would be significant, any cumulative impacts associated with implementation of the proposed Area Plan would be significant.

¹⁰ South Coast Air Quality Management District, *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, p. A9-126, 1993.

Cumulative Global Climate Change

The proposed policies are designed to reduce GHG emissions during construction, directly and indirectly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and sequester carbon dioxide. Implementation of these policies would reduce potential General Plan air quality impacts under this criterion; however not to a level of less than significant.

Mitigation has been proposed to reduce the projects impacts to less than significant. However, even with mitigation impacts to project and cumulative GHG emissions would remain significant and unavoidable. Nonetheless, it should be noted that as AB 32's mandate is brought to fruition, through the adoption of regulations and additional legislation, additional GHG reduction measures would be implemented, and the proposed Area Plan, and the residents and businesses that occupy buildout areas facilitated by the proposed Area Plan, would be subject to those reduction measures.

Section 15130, subdivision (c), of the *State CEQA Guidelines* acknowledges that "[w]ith some projects, the only feasible mitigation for cumulative impacts may involve the adoption of ordinances or regulations rather than the imposition of conditions on a project-by-project basis." Global climate change is this type of issue, as the very causes and effects of global climate change are not determined on a local or regional scale. Therefore, given the uncertainties in identifying, let alone quantifying, the impact of any single project on global climate change, and the efforts made to design the proposed Area Plan and development facilitated by it with sustainable development principles in mind, any further mitigation is best accomplished through CARB regulations implementing the mandated reduction goals of AB 32.

Cumulative Agricultural Resources

The **Land Use Policy Map** is consistent with the proposed policies in that it will designate some areas within the County's Planning Area that are considered Important Farmland under the California Department of Conservation (CDC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) as Open Space and Rural Land. There are some areas within the County's Planning Area that have been designated as Important Farmland by the CDC FMMP during their 2004–2006 mapping cycle; however, these areas are undergoing the processes of conversion to urbanized land uses under previous land use approvals. Under the next update cycle (2006–2008 FMMP Mapping Cycle) these areas will appropriately not be designated as Important Farmland. Therefore, the proposed **Land Use Policy Map** and proposed Area Plan are consistent with non-conversion of Important Farmland, and would be considered less than significant under *State CEQA Guidelines*.

Cumulative Aesthetic Impacts

This section describes those resources that define the visual character and quality of the County's Planning Area. Resources within the County's Planning Area as well as the City's Planning Area include a variety of natural and manmade elements and the viewsheds to those elements that serve as visual landmarks and contribute to the unique character of the County's Planning Area. Although specific scenic resources in the County's Planning Area are identified in this section, it is not intended to provide an exhaustive inventory, as the nature of these resources is somewhat subjective and not easily quantified. Implementation of the proposed Area Plan would increase development within the OVOV Planning Area, which, if unregulated, would contribute to the obstruction of views, damage scenic resources, conflict with the Valley's rural character, and generate substantial levels of light and glare. However, the proposed Area Plan includes policies that would ensure the protection of scenic resources and corridors, promote quality construction that enhances the County Planning Area's urban form, increase open space and landscaping, and limit light overspill. For these reasons, implementation of the County's Area Plan would result in a less than significant impact on aesthetics and therefore would not have cumulatively cumulative impacts.

Cumulative Biological Resources

The proposed policies do not provide a mechanism for the compensation of lost habitats when avoidance or minimization of impacts is considered to be infeasible, nor do they mitigate for the direct mortality of individuals of listed, proposed, or candidate species. In conjunction with the proposed Area Plan policies, **MM 3.7-1** through **3.7-3** are proposed to reduce these impacts. However, special-status species are dependent on a variety of habitat types, including non-sensitive annual grassland and various common scrub and chaparral types, and habitat loss of these types would therefore not be compensated for under **MM 3.7-3**. Thus, the conversion of all types of currently undeveloped wildlife habitat to Residential, Commercial and Industrial uses permitted under the Area Plan would result in impacts on special-status species that will remain significant at the plan level.

In conjunction with the proposed Area Plan policies, **MM 3.7-1** through **3.7-3** are proposed to reduce impacts on riparian and other sensitive habitats to a level that is less than significant at the plan level. In combination with requirements for Section 404 permitting, the proposed policies would reduce impacts resulting from implementation of the Area Plan to a level that is less than significant at the plan level. Thus no significant impacts on jurisdictional wetlands are anticipated and no mitigation is proposed.

The proposed policies do not provide for the compensation of lost wildlife movement opportunities or nursery sites when avoidance or minimization of impacts is considered to be infeasible. Loss of connectivity between the two units of the Angeles National Forest could not be compensated for since the intervening habitats would be the only ones which could provide the necessary avenues of exchange. Therefore, this potential loss could not be adequately mitigated, and the impact of development would remain significant in the event that avoidance of impacts to habitat linkages arising from said development is considered infeasible. Therefore, cumulative biological impacts would occur.

Cumulative Cultural Resources

The proposed Area Plan's contribution to the growth and urbanization of the County's Planning Area would result in the direct and/or indirect loss of historical resources, archeological resources, paleontological resources, and the possible disturbance of human remains. This loss would result from urban redevelopment and conversion of culturally and paleontologically sensitive landscapes to urban uses. The proposed Area Plan area is comprised of large portions of undeveloped, open land that may contain cultural resources, paleontological resources, and human remains. However, implementation of the proposed policies, in conjunction with mitigation measures **MM 3.8-1** to **MM 3.8-7** provided on a project by project basis, would not cumulatively contribute to the potential loss of cultural resources.

Cumulative Geology, Soils, Seismicity

As described below, individual cumulative projects have the potential to result in significant impacts related to geology and geologic hazards under *State CEQA Threshold Guidelines*. Geologic hazard impacts, such as fault rupture, ground shaking, landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, and slope stability, tend to be location-specific rather than cumulative in regard to project-related effects. Therefore, impacts under these criteria would not be cumulatively significant. Individual development projects are required to adopt site development and construction standards that are intended to minimize the effects of seismic and other geologic conditions. Because development projects must be consistent with Los Angeles County requirements and the California Building Code (CBC) as they pertain to protection against known geologic hazards, the geologic hazard impacts of cumulative development are considered less than significant, and implementation of the proposed Area Plan would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to such impacts.

Cumulative projects or groups of projects would result in significant or potentially significant erosion-related impacts prior to mitigation, of which the combined effect has the potential to result in cumulative impacts on regional resources, such as the Santa Clara River. Prior to mitigation, the implementation of

the proposed Area Plan would result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to significant cumulative erosion impacts due to the potential future development related to buildout of the proposed Area Plan, which would be mitigated by implementation of the applicable mitigation measures **MM 3.9-1** to **MM 3.9-10**.

As discussed above, significant cumulative erosion-related impacts would occur. However, the implementation of the proposed Area Plan and all cumulative projects in the OVOV Planning Area would be required to comply with NPDES and other regulatory requirements set forth in **Section 3.12**. Such compliance ensures that each of the past, current, and probable project's erosion-related impacts are reduced to a less than cumulatively considerable level; any cumulative impacts would be less than significant, after mitigation.

Cumulative Mineral Resources

The proposed Area Plan's contribution to the growth and urbanization of the County's Planning Area would result in the direct and/or indirect loss of mineral resources. The potential loss of mineral resources would result from urban development, redevelopment, and conversion of open space to urban uses. The County's Planning Area is comprised of large portions of undeveloped, open land containing mineral resource zones and the Area Plan provides policies to protect these mineral resources. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Area Plan would not have a significant cumulative impact on the loss of these areas and their resources.

Cumulative Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Hazards and hazardous materials impacts tend to be site specific and are assessed on a site-by-site basis. As described in **Section 3.11, Hazards and Hazardous Materials**, the transport of hazardous materials is generally along major transportation routes, including Interstate 5 (I-5) and State Route 14 (SR-14). Major highways within the County's Planning Area are protected in regards to hazardous materials transportation through the guidelines and policies of CalTrans, the agency that is responsible for transportation of hazardous waste on the state's freeway system. Any new development in the County's Planning Area in which businesses use hazardous materials will be required to go through a review process to ensure that adequate setback and buffer features reduce possible contamination to residents and the environment. All new businesses that would use hazardous waste within the County's Planning Area would be required to verify their procedures for storage, use, and disposal of these materials to reduce exposure to residents and the environment. Additionally, the County of Los Angeles will promote events to provide a correct means of disposing household hazardous waste. Implementation of these

policies will therefore reduce the possibility of exposure of hazardous materials to the public or environment through transportation, use and disposal, and impacts would be less than significant. CEQA does not require analysis of potential cumulative impacts where the proposed Area Plan itself does not result in any impacts.¹¹ Therefore, no analysis of cumulative impacts is required for potential hazards and hazardous material related impacts.

Cumulative Hydrology and Water Quality Impacts

Development of the Area Plan would increase runoff into the Santa Clara River from upland areas due to increased impervious surface areas (e.g., pavement, roads, and buildings). The drainage improvements associated with cumulative projects in Los Angeles County would be required to conform to the requirements of the Department of Public Works (DPW) to convey the capital flood event from the affected watersheds. In addition, similar flood control requirements exist in Ventura County, which would be affected by increased runoff into the Santa Clara River from upland areas, as discussed below. Therefore, no significant cumulative flooding impacts are expected to occur within the watershed.

Additionally, the Ventura County Watershed Protection District, which covers the Ventura County areas of the Santa Clara River watershed, has requirements for flood design standards based on a 100-year flood. These regulatory requirements for the Ventura County Watershed Protection District would apply to development in Ventura County areas. Compliance with these regulatory programs by other projects in the watershed would minimize potential cumulative hydrology impacts related to flooding.

The proposed Area Plan would not have a significant hydrology impact, even prior to mitigation. Nonetheless, this EIR includes additional mitigation measures (**MM 3.9-8 to 3.9-10** and **MM 3.12-1 to MM 3.12-5**) to further ensure that impacts remain less than significant. The proposed Area Plan would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to any significant cumulative hydrology impacts. Other cumulative projects should be required to comply with regulatory requirements and measures similar to **MM 3.12-1 to MM 3.12-5** that will further ensure that any potential hydrology impacts of those projects are minimized.

Implementation of the proposed Area Plan would not increase the risk of dam failure and subsequent inundation hazards. Thus, the proposed Area Plan would not contribute to a cumulative impact relating to dam inundation hazards.

¹¹ CEQA, Section 15130 (a)(1).

Cumulative Water Service Impacts-

Because cumulative water supplies exceed demand within the Castaic Lake Water Agency (CLWA) service area and the East Subbasin, cumulative development would not result in unavoidable significant cumulative impacts on water resources in this area. This includes potential impacts on groundwater resources related to recharge potential and perchlorate contamination. This is due to the fact that urbanization in the Santa Clarita Valley has been accompanied by long-term stability in pumping and groundwater levels, plus the addition of imported State Water Program (SWP) and non-SWP imported water to the OVOV Planning Area, which together have not created a reduction in recharge to groundwater, nor depleted the amount of groundwater that is in storage within the OVOV Planning Area. In addition, evidence indicates that the perchlorate treatment and containment program presently being implemented in the Santa Clarita Valley is reducing perchlorate-related impacts to less than significant levels. Therefore, cumulative mitigation measures are not required and there would be a less than significant cumulative impact within the CLWA service area and East Subbasin.

Based on the available information, significant water supply impacts would result from OVOV Plan buildout in portions of the Planning Area outside of CLWA's service area boundary and the East Subbasin. For areas outside of the CLWA service area and East Subbasin, locations that are without access to imported SWP and non-SWP imported water, recycled water, or groundwater from the East Subbasin, groundwater resources are currently strained as private wells are, in some instances, running dry. Despite implementation of the mitigation measures provided in this EIR, cumulative impacts to water resources in this area would remain significant.

Cumulative Community Services Impacts

Discussion of Cumulative Community Service Impacts

Cumulative impacts of development that occur with implementation of the proposed Area Plan will be continually monitored through the environmental review process for proposed projects. As development occurs in the Planning Area, additional appropriate mitigation measures will be included as part of the environmental analysis performed for individual projects. The Community Services section below analyzes senior and youth, cultural amenities, and homeless and emergency shelters.

Senior and Youth

The implementation of the proposed Area Plan policies would provide the County, on a project by project basis, the opportunity to adequately designate areas for senior housing and facilities. The location

of the senior housing and facilities should also consider accessibility of public transit. Implementation of the proposed Area Plan would reduce the potential cumulative impacts on senior housing and/or activities to less than significant. Implementation of the proposed Area Plan would provide the opportunity for youths to be able to participate in activities outside of school and would have a less than significant cumulative impact.

Cultural Amenities

Implementation of the proposed Area Plan would enhance the access of cultural amenities to the County's Planning Area and would potentially allow for the joint use of facilities. Therefore, cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Homeless and Emergency Shelters

Implementation of the proposed Area Plan would help to ensure that there are adequate emergency shelters in the case of an emergency. The proposed Area Plan would also encourage assistance to homeless persons through social service agencies and suitable shelters. Implementation of the Area Plan would minimize potentially adverse cumulative impacts on homelessness and emergency shelter services to less than significant.

Cumulative Public Services Impacts

Cumulative impacts of development that occur with implementation of the proposed Area Plan will be continually monitored through the environmental review process for proposed projects. As development occurs in the OVOV Planning Area, additional appropriate mitigation measures will be included as part of the environmental analysis performed for individual projects. The Public Services section below analyzes library services, health services, education services, fire protection, and sheriff protection.

Cumulative impacts would be contingent upon the level of demand for medical services and facilities. The level of demand would be determined based on the periodic medical needs assessments. The projected increase in the County's population will occur incrementally over approximately 20 years and will proportionally increase the demand for medical facilities and services. This would be an OVOV Planning Area service and facilities impact. Therefore, the increase in future residents resulting from the proposed Area Plan would contribute to cumulative impacts that would remain significant.

As stated in **Section 3.15**, the proposed Area Plan would not result in significant direct, indirect, or secondary public service impacts with implementation of the previously adopted mitigation measures

MM 3.15-1 to **MM 3.15-4** and SB 50. Mitigation measure **MM 3.15-4** would further ensure that impacts on law enforcement services remain less than significant by requiring payment of the Los Angeles County Law Enforcement Facilities Mitigation Fee for north Los Angeles County prior to issuance of building permits. Aside from **MM 3.15-4**, however, no additional public services mitigation measures are recommended or required by this EIR.

Based on state and local regulatory requirements, cumulative projects can and should be required to include mitigation (SB 50) to set aside land for school facilities and contribute their fair share to school funding programs. The appropriate district mitigation should be required, similar to **MM 3.15-2** and **MM 3.15-3** to reduce fire protection impacts, similar to **MM 3.15-4** to minimize impacts on police services by designing projects to minimize response times by optimizing access and paying into the Los Angeles County Law Enforcement Facilities Mitigation Fee for north Los Angeles County, and similar to **MM 3.15-1** to fund or contribute to funding of additional libraries. Because state and local regulatory requirements will require implementation of this mitigation for cumulative projects, cumulative impacts to public services are considered to be less than significant after mitigation.

Cumulative Recreation Impacts

The proposed Area Plan would not contribute to cumulative recreational facility impacts because it would dedicate parkland that would exceed what is required by the County pursuant to the Quimby Act. Additional recreation facilities would include trails consistent with County policies. Thus, the impacts of the proposed Area Plan on cumulative parks and recreation resources would not be cumulatively considerable.

Cumulative Utilities and Infrastructure

Discussion of Utilities and Infrastructure

Cumulative impacts of development that occur with implementation of the proposed Area Plan will be continually monitored through the environmental review process for proposed projects. As development occurs in the OVOV Planning Area, additional appropriate mitigation measures will be included as part of the environmental analysis performed for individual projects. The Utilities and Infrastructure section below analyzes wastewater, solid waste, electricity, natural gas, and telecommunication demands.

Wastewater

Implementation of the proposed Area Plan policies related to wastewater would ensure adequate wastewater facilities as development occurs, thereby reducing the effects of future development and avoiding exceedances of wastewater treatment requirements of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board. As buildout occurs, the need for construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities would be determined by the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District. If new facilities were to be constructed, the project(s) would be required to undergo an environmental review per CEQA. Implementation of the proposed Area Plan policies related to wastewater and the implementation of the objectives of the *Final 2015 Santa Clarita Valley Joint Sewerage System Facilities* would ensure adequate wastewater capacity to serve the buildout of the County's Planning Area.

Solid Waste

The County's Planning Area uses three landfills within or near the OVOV Planning Area. They include the Chiquita Canyon Landfill, Antelope Valley Landfill, and the Sunshine Canyon Landfill. Landfills throughout the state have permitted maximum capacities (the amount of waste[s] in tons or cubic yards a permitted facility is allowed to receive, handle, process, store, or dispose of). The County does not have adopted solid waste disposed figures. However, since the County's Planning Area is adjacent to and surrounds the City's Planning Area, it would be reasonable to assume that solid waste disposed figures for the County's Area Plan would be similar to those for the City of Santa Clarita. Consequently, solid waste disposed figures used by the City of Santa Clarita are utilized for this analysis. In 2007, the amount of waste disposed by the City's Planning Area was 163,000 tons which would correlate to 48,512 tons of waste disposed for the County's Planning Area. The projected buildout amount of waste, generated by the County's Planning Area, would be 550.4 tons per day or 209,909.2 tons per year. Based on the 2008 Annual Report of the County of Los Angeles Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan a Disposal Capacity Shortfall is expected to occur beginning in 2014 at landfills in the County of Los Angeles. The shortfall in capacity is estimated to be at 1,172 tons per day (tpd) beginning in 2014 and estimated to increase to 11,665 tpd in the year 2023. Development of proposed expansions and exporting up to 10,000 tpd of solid waste out of the County would not be able to meet the Daily Disposal Demand of the County. With implementation of the development in the OVOV County Planning Area, the estimated amount of solid waste that would be generated would contribute to the shortfall of capacity in the Los Angeles County landfill system. Therefore, the impacts from buildout to the solid waste system would be significant and unavoidable even with the incorporation of **MM 3.17-1** to **MM 3.17-5**.

Electricity, Natural Gas, and Telecommunications

Future growth anticipated with build out of the proposed Area Plan would include new development that will increase the demand for electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications, which would substantially contribute to a significant cumulative impact on the availability of all three resources.

Cumulative Noise Impacts

Build out of the proposed Area Plan would result in potential cumulative noise level increases along major roadways and near industrial/commercial zones. Each of these noise impacts would be dealt with separately when new noise sensitive or noise generating developments are proposed. However, it is not always possible to reduce construction noise impacts to below standards set forth in the County's Noise Ordinance; therefore, short-term construction noise impacts are unavoidably significant for the duration of the construction activities. Short-term noise and vibration impacts from the pile driving would be unavoidably significant for the duration of the pile driving. Operational noise impacts would be considered significant and unavoidable. Implementation of the proposed Area Plan would result in significant cumulative noise impacts that could not be mitigated with the implementation of the proposed Area Plan policies and mitigation measures. Thus, the proposed Area Plan would substantially contribute to cumulative noise impacts.

Cumulative Population and Housing Impacts

Upon build out of the proposed Area Plan, the population of the County's Planning Area is estimated to be approximately 237,387 residents. This represents an increase of 162,387 residents in the County's Planning Area. SCAG estimates that the 2035 population of the unincorporated areas of the North Los Angeles County subregion (which includes unincorporated region of Santa Clarita Valley, City of Santa Clarita, and the Antelope Valley) will be 434,773 residents. Implementation of the proposed Area Plan would account for approximately 54 percent of this growth. Therefore, population growth in the unincorporated Santa Clarita Valley due to buildout of the proposed Area Plan is consistent with overall growth anticipated by SCAG for the unincorporated North Los Angeles County subregion. While future increases in population and housing would occur within the County's Planning Area, the rate of growth is consistent with annual SCAG rates of growth. Development on a scale and intensity permitted under the proposed Area Plan would result in consistent cumulative significant population increases within the OVOV Planning Area. CEQA does not require analysis of cumulative impacts where the proposed Area Plan itself does not result in any impacts. (40 C.F.R. Section 1508.7; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, Section 15130, subd. (a)(1).

5.0 EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 15128 of the *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines* requires a brief statement of the reasons why various possible significant effects of a project have been determined not to be significant and, therefore, are not discussed in detail in the environmental impact report (EIR). The following provides a discussion regarding the effects of the proposed project that were found not to be significant. The following resource areas did not have a potentially significant impact: aesthetics; biological resources in regards to complying with the implementation of local protective policies and ordinances or local, state, and regional conservation plans; hazardous and hazardous materials; and public services—school facilities. Other resource areas were found to be significant or less than significant with the implementation of mitigation measures.

EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

Potential impacts for this EIR were analyzed using the *State CEQA Guidelines* thresholds of significance.

Aesthetics (Section 3.6)

Impact 3.6-2 Implementation of the proposed Area Plan would result in a significant impact to scenic resources within a scenic highway.

There are no designated state scenic highways in the Santa Clarita Valley. State Route 126 is designated as an eligible state scenic highway, but is not officially designated. The adopted Los Angeles County General Plan designates state Route 126 as a "First Priority Scenic Route" which is proposed for further study, but has no regulatory restrictions placed on it. As there are no state scenic highways in the County's Planning Area, no proposed Area Plan policies address scenic resources specifically within a state scenic highway. Since no state scenic highways are located within the County's Planning Area, implementation of the proposed Area Plan would not affect scenic resources within a state scenic highway. No impact would occur.

Biological Resources (Section 3.7)

Impact 3.7-5 Local protective policies and ordinances

The County's proposed Area Plan would protect oak and other significant indigenous woodlands and would protect biological resources in the designated Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) through the siting and design of development to account for and be highly compatible with these resources.

Additionally, the proposed Area Plan does not incorporate any changes to the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance or to the City of Santa Clarita's Oak Tree Preservation ordinance. These ordinances are applied on a project-specific basis regardless of underlying land-use regulations. The proposed Area Plan incorporates a new set of policies for the protection of biological resources to which new developments would be required to conform. Therefore, the County's proposed Area Plan would not conflict with the implementation of local protective policies and ordinances. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Impact 3.7-6 Conflicts with local, regional, or state conservation plans

The County's Planning Area contains areas designated or proposed as critical habitat for the unarmored threespine stickleback, arroyo toad, California red-legged frog, coastal California gnatcatcher, California condor, and least Bell's vireo, and specific development projects would be subject to consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service if impacts to any of these species were to result from project implementation involving a federal action. However, the County's Planning Area does not contain any areas falling within the purview of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State Habitat Conservation Plan. Implementation of the proposed Area Plan would therefore not conflict with the provisions of such a conservation plan. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials (Section 3.11)

Impact 3.11-6 The project is within the vicinity of a private airstrip, which would result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area

There may be private airstrips within the boundaries of the County Planning Area. However, those locations were not identified during this analysis and should be considered during project-level analysis.

Public Services (Section 3.15)

Impact 3.15-3 A significant impact to school facilities will occur if buildout of the proposed Area Plan will increase demand for school facilities and services beyond the enrollment capacities of school facilities serving the County's Planning Area.

The proposed Area Plan policy addresses the need to ensure that school districts are not over capacity and overcrowded. State law limits the power of the County to impose mitigation for development impacts on schools. Because the Government Code¹ states that compliance with Senate Bill 50 will provide full and complete mitigation, no significant impact would occur.

¹ California Government Code. Section 65996 (a) and (b). 2008.

6.0 ALTERNATIVES

INTRODUCTION

This section of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) provides a comparative analysis of the impacts of alternatives to the proposed project pursuant to Section 15126.6 of the *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines*, as amended. It identifies potentially feasible ways to avoid or substantially lessen the potentially significant effects resulting from implementation of the proposed Area Plan. According to the *State CEQA Guidelines*,¹ an EIR needs to examine a reasonable range of alternatives to a project, or its location, which would feasibly meet most of the basic objectives of the project while avoiding or substantially lessening significant impacts. When addressing feasibility, the *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6 states that “[a]mong the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives are site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, General Plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries (projects with a regionally significant impact should consider the regional context), and whether the applicant can reasonably acquire, control or otherwise have access to the alternative site (or the site is already owned by the proponent).” Pursuant to the *State CEQA Guidelines*, several factors need to be considered in determining the range of alternatives to be analyzed in an EIR and the level of analytical detail that should be provided for each alternative. These factors include (1) the nature of the significant impacts of the proposed project, (2) the ability of alternatives to avoid or substantially lessen the significant impacts associated with the project, (3) the ability of the alternatives to meet the objectives of the project, and (4) the feasibility of the alternatives. Each alternative selected for evaluation in this EIR is described below and followed by a comparative analysis.

RANGE OF REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

According to the *State CEQA Guidelines*,² the discussion of alternatives should focus on alternatives to a project or its location that can feasibly avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects of the project. The alternatives discussion should provide decision makers with an understanding of the comparative merits of the alternatives in relation to the proposed project.

¹ California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, *California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines*, Section 15126.6.

² California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, *California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines*, Section 15126.6(f)(1).

Section 3.0, Environmental Impact Analysis, of this EIR concludes that implementation of the proposed Area Plan would result in significant and unavoidable environmental impacts with respect to the following:

- **Air Quality** – while policies would reduce air pollutant emissions, the potential for impacts on air quality from implementation of the proposed Area Plan would remain significant and unavoidable. Impacts would be considered potentially significant and mitigation measures are required. Nonetheless, even with mitigation, impacts to air quality are potentially significant and unavoidable.
- **Global Climate Change** – Implementation of the proposed Area Plan and the City of Santa Clarita’s proposed General Plan would increase greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions over existing conditions. While proposed Area Plan and General Plan policies would reduce GHG emissions, potential impacts on climate change from implementation of the proposed Area Plan and General Plan would be potentially significant and unavoidable after mitigation given the increase in emissions.
- **Water Supply** – In areas outside the CLWA service area and the East Subbasin however, local groundwater supplies are not adequate to meet the needs of all existing residents due to the apparent overreliance on the groundwater deposits as evidenced by declining water levels and dry wells. Consequently, local supplies would not be able to meet the needs of OVOV buildout in this area and impacts would be significant after mitigation.
- **Biological Resources** – loss of open space from the impact of development
- **Utilities and Infrastructure, Solid Waste** – inadequate landfill space for solid waste
- **Noise** – short-term construction noise impacts are unavoidably significant for the duration of the construction activities and short-term noise and vibration impacts from the pile driving would be unavoidably significant for the duration of the pile driving

In response to these significant impacts, the County developed and considered several alternatives to the project. These alternatives include:

- **Alternative 1** – No Project/Existing SCV (Santa Clarita Valley) Area Plan
- **Alternative 2** – Preservation Corridor Alternative
- **Alternative 3** – Transit Corridor/Increased Employment Opportunity Alternative

Project Objectives

The alternatives to the proposed project ultimately selected for analysis in this EIR were developed to avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed project, while still meeting many of the project’s objectives. The following are objectives for the proposed project:

Management of Growth

1. Growth in the Santa Clarita Valley shall account for the visions and objectives for each community and must be consistent with principles, as subsequently defined in this document, for the protection of the Valley's significant environmental resources. It must also be based on the availability of or ability to provide adequate infrastructure, schools, and public services, and must be carefully planned to benefit the community's economy, lifestyles, and needs.
2. Growth shall occur within and on the periphery of previously developed areas, rather than as "leapfrog" development or in areas of critical environmental habitat or natural hazards, and taking into consideration accessibility to infrastructure and public services.
3. Development shall be prioritized in areas for infill and redevelopment sites within currently developed areas consistent with community character objectives and those for which the County and City have approved entitlements. Commitments for new development outside of these areas shall be made in accordance with the other principles defined in this document.
4. Higher density development, including multi-family housing and mixed use projects that integrate housing with commercial uses, shall be targeted in areas adjacent to existing and planned transit corridors, stations, and key activity centers, such as the Valencia Town Center and portions of Newhall and Soledad Canyon Road.

Environmental Resources

5. The natural buffer area surrounding the entire Valley, which includes the Angeles National Forest, Santa Susana, San Gabriel, Sierra Pelona, and Del Sur mountains, shall be preserved as a regional recreational, ecological, and aesthetic resource.
6. The Santa Clara River corridor and its major tributaries shall be preserved as open space to accommodate storm water flows and protect critical plant and animal species (riparian vegetation, fish, etc.).
 - a. Uses and improvements within the corridor shall be limited to those that benefit the community's use of the river in its natural state.
 - b. Development on properties adjacent to, but outside of the defined primary river corridor, shall be:
 - located and designed to protect the river's water quality, plants, and animal habitats, controlling the type and density of uses, drainage runoff (water treatment), and other relevant elements; and
 - designed to maximize the full range of river amenities, including views and recreational access, while minimizing adverse impacts to the River.
7. The Santa Clarita Valley's prominent ridgelines shall be preserved and hillside development shall be limited to protect their valuable aesthetic and visual qualities intrinsic to the Valley landscape.

8. Development shall be located and designed to minimize the impact on the Valley topography, emphasizing the use of grading techniques for development pads that mimic the natural topography in lieu of repetitive flat pads to the extent feasible and consistent with a community's open space objectives.
9. Development shall be located and designed to protect oak, sycamore, and other significant indigenous woodlands.
10. Biological resources in the designated Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) shall be protected through the siting and design of development to account for and be highly compatible with their resources. Specific development standards shall be identified to control the types of land use, density, building location and size, roadways and other infrastructure, landscape, drainage, and other elements to assure the protection of the critical and important plant and animal habitats of each SEA. In general, the principle shall be to minimize the intrusion and impacts of development in these areas with sufficient setbacks, or buffers, to adequately protect the resources.
11. New development shall be designed to improve energy efficiency, reducing energy and natural resource consumption by such techniques as the use of solar generators, recycling of treated wastewater, capture of storm runoff on site, and use of recycled materials in building construction, native and drought-tolerant landscape, and energy and water efficient appliances and systems.

Land Uses

12. The Santa Clarita Valley shall contain a diversity of land uses that support the needs of current and future residents including housing, schools, libraries, parks, retail, business and industry, civic institutions, medical and social services, cultural, entertainment, open spaces, and comparable uses.
13. The type and density of land uses in the Santa Clarita Valley shall be varied to reflect the special characteristics, life styles, and opportunities that differentiate its communities. A choice of urban, suburban, and rural environments will be provided.
14. Valley communities shall contain a mix of uses that support the basic needs of residents – places to live, shop, recreate, meet/socialize, and enjoy the environmental setting – that are appropriate and consistent with their community character. Regionally oriented uses that serve residents of the entire Valley or export goods and services may be concentrated in key business centers rather than uniformly dispersed throughout the Valley communities.
15. Development in the Valley shall be guided by a common set of land use designations and standards for comparable uses in comparable locations. These standards, however, may be varied to reflect the unique intentions for the quality and character of the distinct communities that comprise the Valley.

Residential Neighborhoods

16. The Valley shall contain a mix of housing types that meet the diverse needs of residents, and offer choices for the Valley's population and lifestyles (ages, education, income, etc.) that are appropriate and consistent with their community character. This shall include a combination of single- and multi-

family, owner occupied and rental units within *each* community, and mixed-use (i.e., integrated housing with commercial or office uses) development in key activity centers.

17. The Valley is committed to providing affordable work force housing to meet the needs of individuals employed in the Santa Clarita Valley.
18. Multi-family housing developments shall contain adequate recreational and open space amenities on site and be designed to ensure a high quality living environment. Their architectural treatment and building massing shall complement the characteristics of surrounding single-family residential neighborhoods.
19. Neighborhood scale development shall be encouraged by promoting mixed density of housing units consistent with community character objectives and limiting the number and acreage of multi-family units that can be developed in any single location.
20. Housing developments located in the more urbanized communities of the Valley shall be designed to create a sense of neighborhood by:
 - a. promoting walkability and containing places that serve as centers of activity and identity (schools, multi-purpose facilities, parks, convenience services, neighborhood commercial centers, etc.);
 - b. containing a mix of housing types, densities, and parcel sizes, avoiding large areas and an over-concentration of homogeneous density units;
 - c. minimizing the dependence on, prominence, and area dedicated to the automobile;
 - d. featuring architectural design treatments along all frontages of new housing to promote continuity of architectural scale and rhythm and avoid “blank walls”; and
 - e. including pedestrian linkages, landscaped parkways and green corridors, and separated trails (pedestrian, bicycle or equestrian) where appropriate and feasible

Vital Economy

21. Commercial and retail uses will be expanded and new centers developed to meet the needs of the Valley’s residents, as supportable by the market, minimize the need to travel outside of the Valley, complement (and do not adversely compete with) existing uses, and contribute to a balanced Valley economy.
22. New “clean” industries and businesses that provide job opportunities for local residents and enhance the economy shall be encouraged within and adjacent to existing and planned business centers/parks, and adjacent to transportation corridors.
23. Older commercial areas and corridors that are economically and/or physically obsolete or deteriorated, such as portions of Castaic, Val Verde, Newhall, Lyons Avenue, Sierra Highway, San Fernando Road, and Soledad Canyon Road, shall be redeveloped for commercial, mixed use,

residential or other appropriate uses that complement and serve adjoining land uses and can be adequately supported by the market. Where appropriate, redeveloped uses and buildings shall reflect the area's important architectural and cultural history.

Mobility

24. A unified and well-maintained network of highways, streets, truck routes, bikeways, and pedestrian paths will provide access among Valley communities and to regional centers outside of the Valley.
25. Santa Clarita Valley's streets and highways shall be developed and maintained according to common standards for right-of-way, paving and other improvements, landscape, signage, lighting, and curb cuts for "like" street categories. These standards shall take into consideration of objectives for the character of the Valley's communities consistent with public health and safety.
26. A continuous bikeway network shall provide circulation within each community, connect the various Santa Clarita Valley communities, and provide access to surrounding open spaces.
27. An integrated transit system shall serve the Valley (rail, bus, shuttle, other) offering convenient alternatives to the automobile, minimizing congestion and providing access to regional transportation systems, such as Metrolink.

Infrastructure

28. The location and timing of development shall be coordinated with the provision of adequate water, wastewater treatment, storm drainage, telecommunications, energy, roads, and other infrastructure.
29. Public infrastructure shall be improved, maintained, and expanded as needed to meet the needs of projected population and employment growth and contribute to the Valley's quality of life.
30. Common standards for providing utility infrastructure (flood control channels, energy transmission, telecommunications, and so on) shall be developed and applied throughout the Valley, in consideration of the character of each community.

Schools and Public Services

31. The County and City shall work in partnership with the Santa Clarita Valley school districts and the State of California to ensure the development of adequate facilities and programs to serve the needs and achieve a high level of academic excellence for local students.
32. While the County and City do not have direct authority over the development of public schools, they shall continue to coordinate with the school districts on issues of mutual interest such as transportation services, shared facilities, and long range planning for Valley schools.
33. Public services (police, fire, health care, youth, seniors, homeless, and other) shall be expanded to support community needs and population growth.

Recreation

34. The County and City shall recognize that trails are an important recreational asset that, when integrated with transportation systems, contribute to mobility throughout the Santa Clarita Valley.
35. A continuous and unified hiking and equestrian trail network for a variety of users and developed according to common standards shall connect and unify Santa Clarita Valley communities and be interconnected with the regional and statewide system (e.g., Pacific Crest Trail).
36. New parklands will be developed throughout the Santa Clarita Valley, with priority on locations that are not now adequately served. These shall encompass a diversity of park types and functions, including passive and active areas, in consideration of the recreational needs of the residents to be served.
 - a. Common park standards shall be developed and applied throughout the Valley, consistent with community character objectives.
 - b. A range of parkland types, sizes and uses shall be provided to accommodate recreational and leisure activities.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

References to the City's General Plan are contained throughout the following alternative analysis because there are several resource areas (e.g., land use, air quality, global climate change, traffic and circulation, and noise) with potential impacts to the entire One Valley One Vision (OVOV) Planning Area, not just the County's Planning Area.

Alternative 1 – No Project/Existing SCV Area Plan

Section 15126.6(e)(1) of the *State CEQA Guidelines* requires evaluation of the No Project Alternative. As described in the *State CEQA Guidelines*, the purpose of describing and analyzing the No Project Alternative is to allow decision makers to compare the impacts of approving the proposed project with the impacts of not approving the proposed project. Therefore, as required by the *State CEQA Guidelines*, the analysis must examine the impacts that might reasonably be expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the proposed project was not approved. When the project is the revision of an existing land use plan, *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6(e)(3)(A) states that "the No Project Alternative will be the continuation of the existing plan...into the future." Under the No Project Alternative, the proposed Area Plan would not be adopted or implemented, and buildout within the County's Planning Area would continue to occur under the existing Area Plan (adopted in 1984) and adopted Specific Plans. The Housing Element would continue to be updated per California Government Code 65583, as it is a legally required Element for the Countywide General Plan. This alternative does not represent a "no build"

scenario in which no future development would occur. The number of dwelling units at buildout of the existing Area Plan would be 93,400 in 2010 and the residential population would be 270,000 at buildout.³

This No Project analysis discusses the existing conditions at the time the Notice of Preparation (NOP) was prepared as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the proposed Area Plan (proposed project) was not approved. The existing Area Plan was adopted in 1984 and comprehensively updated in 1990. Some of the policies do not reflect current changes in the population, economy, or the environment.

Land Use

Buildout conditions under Alternative 1 would follow the policies of the existing Area Plan. The existing Area Plan would continue to implement land use policy that designates land at residential densities between 0.5 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) and 40 du/ac. The proposed project would designate land at residential densities between 0.05 du/ac and 30 du/ac. As described in **Table 6.0-1, Existing Area Plan and Proposed Area Plan Land Use Designations**, there would be changes in land use designations and in the acreage of those land uses.

As shown in **Table 6.0-1**, Rural Land use designations would decrease by 8,913 acres. Urban Residential land uses would increase by 7,607 acres. Commercial and Industrial land uses would increase by 628 and 1,740 acres respectively. Public and Community Service land uses would increase by 160 acres. Transportation Corridor land uses would increase by 171 acres. Open Space would increase by 3,579 acres, and Specific Plan land uses would increase by 58 acres. Alternative 1 would have less than significant impacts when compared to the proposed project on dividing an established community and any habitat conservation plans. The existing Area Plan policies and the proposed Area Plan policies are consistent with Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) policies. However, the proposed Area Plan Update policies provide guidance for more sustainable and “green” planning within the County’s Planning Area. Overall, impacts on land use would be greater with the proposed Area Plan.

³ County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning, *Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan*, 1990.

**Table 6.0-1
Existing Area Plan and Proposed Area Plan Land Use Designations**

| Land Use Categories | Existing Area Plan Land Use Categories | Existing County Land Use Acres | Proposed Area Plan Land Use Categories | Proposed County Land Use Acres¹ | Change in Acres (existing to proposed) |
|------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Rural Land | Sum of acreages in N1, N2, and HM designations | 76,839 | Sum of acreages in RL1, RL2, RL5, RL10, and RL20 designations | 67,926 | 8,913 |
| Urban Residential | Sum of acreages in U1, U2, U3, and U4 designations | 6,271 | Sum of acreages in H2, H5, H18, and H30 designations | 13,878 | 7,607 |
| Commercial | Sum of acreages in C and RR designations | 1,053 | Sum of acreages in CN and CG designations. | 1,681 | 628 |
| Industrial | Acreage in M designation | 1,411 | Sum of acreages in IL and IO designations | 3,151 | 1,740 |
| Public and Community Service | Sum of acres in P and AP designations | 3,693 | Acreage in P-CS designation | 3,853 | 160 |
| Transportation Corridor | Acreage in TC designations | 3,185 | Acreage in P-TF designation | 3,331 | 146 |
| Other Land Uses | Acreage in W designations | 5,029 | N/A | 0 | -5,029 |
| Open Space | Sum of acreages in all OS designations | 165,192 | Sum of acreages in all OS designations | 168,771 | 3,579 |
| Specific Plan | Acreage in SP designations | 14,283 | Acreage in SP designation. | 14,341 | 58 |

Source: Existing Area Plan Figures – County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning, March 2009. Proposed Area Plan Figures – Project Description, Table 2.0-2.

¹ The County acres includes the unincorporated County land and the City SOI within the OVOV Planning Area. Approximately 18,901.48 acres of land comprise the City's SOI area.

Transportation and Circulation

Transportation and circulation is defined in terms of roadway capacities, Level of Service (LOS), total number of average daily trips (ADT), and the miles traveled. As defined in the proposed project, the LOS ranges from A (least amount of congestion) to F (most traffic). Buildout of the existing County Area Plan and City General Plan would have a total of 1,487,994 ADTs. With buildout of the proposed Area Plan and the City's proposed General Plan, 3,288,386 ADTs would be generated, which would represent an

approximate 3 percent increase (the proposed Area Plan has a greater amount of ADTs due to the increase in the total square feet of commercial land uses).

The existing Area Plan would have an average LOS A at buildout. This would be the same LOS at buildout of the proposed Area Plan and the City's proposed General Plan. Overall, the ICU (intersection capacity utilization) values at each intersection under either buildout scenario would be comparable. The average ICU value during the AM peak hour would decrease slightly from 0.80 to 0.78 (LOS C) and the average ICU value during the PM peak hour would decrease slightly from 0.90 to 0.88 (LOS D) with the proposed plans as compared to the existing plans.

The ADT would be approximately 1.0 percent higher under Alternative 1 than under buildout of the proposed Area Plan and proposed General Plan. The total vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is approximately 15 percent higher for Alternative 1 than with the proposed Area Plan and proposed General Plan. Additionally, the average trip length is higher by approximately 1.9 miles, for an increase of 14 percent under Alternative 1 when compared to buildout of the proposed Area Plan.

Operating conditions along CMP (congestion management process) roadways would improve with buildout of the proposed Area Plan versus buildout of the existing Area Plan. Since the proposed Area Plan would incrementally improve rather than worsen traffic conditions, impacts on CMP roadways would be less than significant. The proposed Area Plan policies address the deficiencies in the existing alternative transportation system, and provide direction for the expansion and improvement of alternative transportation throughout the Santa Clarita Valley. Impacts on transportation and circulation would be greater under Alternative 1.

Air Quality

The estimated daily construction emissions (which would consist of volatile organic compounds [VOC], oxides of nitrogen [NO_x], carbon monoxide [CO], sulfur oxides [SO_x], particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter [PM₁₀], and particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter [PM_{2.5}]) before mitigation would exceed South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) thresholds for both the existing Area Plan and General Plan and the proposed Area Plan and General Plan.

With respect to SCAQMD's threshold to determine cumulative air quality impacts, the projected rate of population growth from **Section 3.19, Population and Housing**, was compared to the rate of ADT growth using information from the project traffic study (**Appendix 3.2**). Population under Alternative 1 is projected to increase from approximately 75,000 to 237,387 in the County's Planning Area. The total

population within the OVOV Planning Area is projected to increase from approximately 177,000 to 460,000 to 485,000. The existing (2004) number of ADTs is expected to increase from 1,487,994 in the OVOV Planning Area to 3,207,093 in the OVOV Planning Area under buildout of the existing Area Plan and General Plan (an ADT growth rate of 1.16 [1.2 for the proposed project]). Since the rate of ADT growth is greater than the rate of population growth, buildout of the existing General Plan and Area Plan would result in a significant cumulative air quality impact.

Alternative 1 would potentially produce operational emissions consisting of VOC, NO_x, CO, SO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} for both summertime and wintertime (in pounds per day). The net increase in emissions, when compared to existing summertime operational emission conditions, would increase 103 percent for ROG and NO_x, 105 percent for CO and SO_x, and 106 percent for PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. The net increase for wintertime emissions under buildout of the existing Area Plan would be 104 percent for NO_x and SO_x, 106 percent for ROG, CO, and PM₁₀, and 107 percent for PM_{2.5}.

The proposed project would potentially increase both summertime and wintertime operational emissions. This increase is based on the existing condition for operational emissions. The summertime increases at buildout for the proposed project would have a net increase of 104 percent for ROG and CO, a 102 percent increase in NO_x and PM_{2.5}, a 105 percent increase in SO_x, and a 99 percent increase in PM₁₀. The wintertime emissions in pounds per day for the buildout of the proposed project would potentially have a net increase of 103 percent for ROG, NO_x, and PM₁₀, a 106 percent increase in CO, a 104 percent increase in PM_{2.5}, and a 100 percent increase in SO_x. Air quality impacts from buildout of the existing Area Plan and General Plan would be similar to those resulting from buildout of the proposed Area Plan and General Plan.

Global Climate Change

Buildout under the existing General Plan would potentially increase greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The GHG emissions potentially produced would amount to approximately 3,221,900 metric tons equivalent carbon dioxide (CO₂E)/year. The net increase in GHG emissions after buildout under the proposed General Plan and Area Plan would be approximately 1,848,400 metric tons CO₂E/year.

Based on the analysis provided in **Section 3.4, Global Warming and Climate Change**, the proposed General Plan and Area Plan contains numerous policies and project features that would reduce GHG emissions from “business as usual” conditions. The existing General Plan does not include many of these policies and would likely not result in GHG reductions on the same order of magnitude as the proposed General Plan and Area Plan. The proposed General Plan and Area Plan would not impede or conflict with the state’s goal of meeting AB 32. Buildout under the proposed General Plan and Area Plan would

be consistent with project design features and mitigation measures recommended by California Air Resources Board (CARB), Office of Planning and Research (OPR), the California Climate Action Team, and the Office of the Attorney General; they would achieve reductions in GHG emissions from business as usual conditions so as to not impede the state's ability to meet AB 32. Because Alternative 1 would not incorporate many of the proposed General Plan and Area Plan policies and features that would reduce GHG emissions, and because Alternative 1 would result in increased GHG emissions compared to the proposed General Plan and Area Plan, Alternative 1 would result in greater climate change impacts. It should be noted that the proposed project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts and would require a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Agricultural Resources

Buildout conditions under Alternative 1 would differ from those under the proposed Area Plan, as seen in **Table 6.0-1**. Agricultural land would be designated as non-urban/rural or open space under both Alternative 1 and the proposed Area Plan. Since Alternative 1 and the proposed Area Plan would designate farmland with similar densities, impacts on agricultural resources under Alternative 1 would be comparable to those associated with the proposed Area Plan.

Aesthetics

Alternative 1 would maintain the County Planning Area's rural character and ensure visual consistency and continuity with the existing natural and built environment. As described in the existing Area Plan policies, light and glare generation would be limited by establishing techniques for light screening and shielding, restricting the use of unnecessary light during non-business nighttime hours, restricting the use of decorative lighting, and protecting open space. Implementation of Alternative 1 would continue to follow codes and ordinances pertaining to light and glare, landscaping, and aesthetic ridgelines and canyons. There are no state scenic highways in the County's Planning Area.

Under the proposed Area Plan, more land would be used for urban residential, commercial, and industrial uses. However, there would be an additional 3,579 acres of open space than with the existing Area Plan. If unregulated, new development under buildout of the proposed Area Plan has the potential to degrade the quality of existing scenic vistas and scenic resources. The proposed Area Plan would provide for the permanent preservation or restoration of important natural and built scenic resources and conservation of scenic vistas. Alternative 1 would have greater aesthetic impacts at buildout.

Biological Resources

Under Alternative 1, 8,913 acres of land would remain as rural that would otherwise be developed under the proposed Area Plan. The proposed Area Plan would include an additional 3,579 acres of open space as compared to Alternative 1 but would result in more land dedicated to urban residential, commercial, and industrial uses. As seen in **Figure 3.1-1, Existing County Area Plan Land Use Policy Map**, six Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) are located throughout the County's Planning Area. These areas are located within San Francisquito Canyon, the Santa Susana Mountains, along the Santa Clara River and its tributaries, Kentucky Springs, Lyon Canyon, and the Valley Oak Savannah. The proposed Area Plan has designated larger and additional areas, such as the Cruzan Mesa Vernal Pools, Santa Felicia, all of the Santa Clara River, and larger portions of the Santa Susana Mountains, as SEAs (**Figure 3.7-2, Current and Proposed Significant Ecological Areas**). Impacts on biological resources under Alternative 1 would therefore be greater than those under the proposed Area Plan.

Cultural Resources

Buildout conditions under Alternative 1 would not increase or decrease the potential to harm a historical, archaeological, or paleontological resource relative to the proposed Area Plan. The proposed Area Plan provides for mitigation to paleontological and unique geotechnical resources, and Alternative 1 does not. Impacts to this resource would be greater under Alternative 1.

Geology, Soils, Seismicity

Buildout under Alternative 1 would be subject to the same geologic conditions and hazards as the proposed project. As described above in **Table 6.0-1**, existing land use designations and allowable densities differ between the existing and proposed Area Plan. Land uses within the proximity of an Alquist-Priolo earthquake fault zone would remain similar in density under the existing Area Plan and the proposed Area Plan. The proposed Area Plan provides for mitigation to undiscovered geotechnical resources, and the Alternative 1 does not. Impacts to this resource would be greater under the Alternative 1.

Mineral Resources

The identification of significant mineral resources that are available for extraction has been identified on **Figure 3.10-1**. The extraction and processing of mineral resources would be approved on a project by project basis under either the existing Area Plan or the proposed Area Plan. Existing Area Plan policy would guide the management and protection of important mineral resources by a long range approach

toward mineral resource utilization. The proposed Area Plan contains policies that state to identify, preserve from encroachment, and conserve and maintain the significant Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ-2) lands. Potential impacts on mineral resources would be comparable.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Alternative 1 would not substantially increase or decrease the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous substances relative to the proposed Area Plan. As required by state law, both the County and City of Santa Clarita have adopted the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) for managing response to multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional emergencies, and to facilitate communications and coordination among all levels of government and affected agencies. The County has adopted an Operational Area Emergency Response Plan, which describes the planned responses to emergencies associated with natural and man-made disasters and technological incidents. The proposed Area Plan employs more comprehensive policies with regard to the location, use and transportation of hazardous materials when compared to Alternative 1. As the emergency response plans are developed and adopted independently of the Area Plan and General Plan process, impacts on emergency preparedness and response would be greater for Alternative 1 when compared to the proposed project. Alternative 1 would support programs related to wildland fire; fire hazard impacts would be comparable to the proposed project.

Hydrology and Water Quality

As the County's Planning Area reaches buildout, the amount of pervious surface area would decrease with increased development and impervious surface area would increase due to more paved surfaces such as parking lots, streets, and sidewalks. As described in **Section 3.12, Hydrology and Water Quality**, existing and proposed developments are subject to state and federal guidelines which regulate surface water quality and discharge, either through point sources or non-point sources.

The re-designation of land uses would have the greatest potential to affect water quality and hydrology. The greatest change in land use designations between the existing and proposed Area Plans would occur in the western portion of the County's Planning Area. The land use designations would change from Hillside Management (maximum of 1 dwelling unit [du]/2 acres [ac]) to Rural Land (between a maximum of 0.05 du/ac and 1 du/ac), Residential (maximum of 5 du/ac), and Industrial Office (maximum Floor Area Ratio of 2.0) under the proposed Area Plan. Under Alternative 1, the amount of unpaved surface area would be potentially greater, promoting more water infiltration and reduced impacts on surface water quality. While Alternative 1 and the proposed Area Plan both contain policies intended to minimize

impacts to the flooding, Alternative 1 does not solely address the impacts associated with existing stormwater drainage systems or reduce the amount of polluted runoff to the extent of the proposed Area Plan, with mitigation. Buildout under Alternative 1 would potentially have greater impacts on hydrology and water quality.

Water Service

An adequate supply of water would be available to serve the portion of the OVOV Planning Area and within the CLWA service area boundary and the East Subbasin, and therefore, impacts would be less than significant. In areas outside the CLWA service area and the East Subbasin however, local groundwater supplies are not adequate to meet the needs of all existing residents due to the apparent overreliance on the groundwater deposits as evidenced by declining water levels and dry wells. Consequently, local supplies would not be able to meet the needs of OVOV buildout in this area and impacts would be significant after mitigation. Buildout under either the proposed project or Alternative 1 would be similar.

Community Services

Youth and Senior Services

As the population of the County's Planning Area reaches buildout under the existing Area Plan, the number of senior citizens would be expected to increase. The County would need to work with childcare facilities and providers to ensure adequate services. Park resources would need to meet the future demands of youth programs and youth sports. Impacts on youth and senior services under the existing Area Plan would be greater due to the higher demand of services from the larger buildout population projection than under the proposed Area Plan.

Cultural Amenities

As the build out of the County's Planning Area increases, the demand on different cultural amenities will also increase. This increase would require more meeting space to accommodate the increase in population. Impacts on cultural amenities would be greater under Alternative 1 than those of the proposed Area Plan due to the higher projected population and thus the greater demand for cultural amenities.

Homelessness and Emergency Shelters

Services such as the provision of emergency shelters and housing for the disadvantaged population are established under the County of Los Angeles Housing Element. Alternative 1 follows the policies and programs for homeless and emergency shelters identified in the adopted Housing Element for the unincorporated areas of the County, as contained in the Countywide General Plan. The proposed Area Plan would also follow the adopted Housing Element and includes land use and zoning designations that allow or emergency shelters and housing. Therefore, impacts on homelessness and emergency shelters would be comparable under Alternative 1 and the proposed project.

Public Services

Libraries

To adequately service the buildout population of 270,000 under Alternative 1, there would need to be 742,500 library items and 135,000 square feet (sf) of library capacity. The five libraries within the OVOV Planning Area have 595,314 available library items and 48,605 square feet of library space. An additional 147,186 library items would be needed at buildout of the existing Area Plan (Alternative 1) and an additional 57,500 library items would be needed at buildout of the proposed Area Plan. Given the existing amount of library space (48,605 sf) and the planned expansion of library space (60,000 sf), an additional 26,395 sf of library space would be needed to meet current library guidelines under buildout of the existing Area Plan (Alternative 1) and an additional 10,089 sf of library space would be needed to meet current library guidelines under buildout of the proposed Area Plan. Impacts on library services under Alternative 1 would be greater than the proposed project.

Health Services

Since the buildout population of 270,000 under the existing Area Plan would be greater than the buildout population of 237,387 under the proposed Area Plan, the County's health and social services needs at buildout under Alternative 1 would be greater. As of 2007, 10.2 percent of the population is age 65 or older. If trends continue, 41,580 people (15.4 percent of the population) would be age 65 or older at buildout of the existing Area Plan (Alternative 1), and 36,577 people (15.4 percent of the population) would be age 65 or older at buildout of the proposed Area Plan. Every age group of the projected population would require adequate health care within the County's Planning Area, not just newborns and the elderly. Therefore, impacts on health services would be greater under Alternative 1 than those of the proposed Area Plan.

Education

The County's Planning Area currently has six school districts and, as of 2008, educates 14,299 students from kindergarten to grade 12. The school districts design capacity is 15,702 students. No school districts are over capacity; however there are five schools over capacity. Implementation of Alternative 1, as well as the proposed Area Plan, would potentially increase the number of new students within the County's Planning Area. The number of projected students is determined using a student generation rate, which is based on the number and type of dwelling units (i.e., single-family detached). As this is a programmatic EIR, the number and types of dwelling units are not provided and therefore, the number of new schools needed at buildout of the County's Planning Area would be conducted on a project-by-project basis. Impacts from implementation of the existing Area Plan would be comparable to that of the proposed Area Plan.

Fire Protection

Since the buildout population under the existing Area Plan would be greater than the buildout population under the proposed Area Plan, the County's fire protection needs at Area Plan buildout would be greater. As the population increases, the number of emergency calls and the emergency response times would potentially increase. Therefore, impacts on fire protection would be greater with buildout of the existing Area Plan.

Police Protection

As described in **Section 3.15, Public Services**, the Sheriff's Department uses a standard guideline of providing at least 1 sworn officer per 1,000 residents. The current number of sworn officers within the County's Planning Area is 171, which provides one officer per 439 residents. At buildout of the current Area Plan (Alternative 1), an additional 99 sworn officers, or a total of 270 sworn officers, would be required to maintain a standard of one officer per 1,000 residents. At buildout of the proposed Area Plan, an additional 66 sworn officers, or a total of 237 sworn officers, would be required to maintain a standard of one officer per 1,000 residents. Alternative 1 would require an additional 33 sworn officers at buildout than the proposed Area Plan at buildout. Therefore, Alternative 1 would have greater impacts on police protection.

Parks and Recreation

Buildout conditions under Alternative 1 would require more parkland to meet the needs of the citizens of the County's Planning Area, per the Quimby Act. Under this alternative, the estimated number of residents in the County's Planning Area would be 270,000. Therefore, 810 acres of parks would be needed to satisfy the Quimby Act requirement of 3 acres per 1,000 residents. Buildout of the proposed Area Plan would require 711 acres of parkland. Therefore, impacts on parks and recreation under Alternative 1 would be greater than the proposed Area Plan.

Utilities and Infrastructure

Wastewater

The County's wastewater generation and treatment needs at Area Plan buildout would need to be evaluated on a project-by-project basis for their potential impact on the capacity and effectiveness of the wastewater treatment system to treat the potential additional sources of wastewater. Due to the potential for greater demand under Alternative 1 on existing and planned wastewater treatment facilities, impacts on wastewater would be greater than those associated with the proposed Area Plan.

Solid Waste

Since the buildout population under Alternative 1 would be greater than the buildout population under the proposed Area Plan, the solid waste generation and disposal needs at buildout under Alternative 1 would potentially be greater. Solid waste generation for the County's Planning Area is analyzed using the adjacent City Planning Area solid waste generation numbers (**Section 3.17, Utilities and Infrastructure**). The amount of waste disposed (2007) within the City's Planning Area was 163,000 tons and the amount of water disposed within the County's Planning Area was 48,512 tons.

The County's Planning Area buildout population under Alternative 1 would be 270,000 residents. Using the same per capita waste generation in the impact analysis, the projected amount of waste disposal at buildout under the existing Area Plan would be 174,434 tons per year. Waste generated at buildout of the proposed Area Plan would be 209,909.2 tons per year. Given the projected amount of landfill capacity needed for the County's Planning Area and the fact that nearby landfills are approaching full capacity, there would be a shortfall of capacity by 2021. The proposed project has determined that this impact is significant and unavoidable. Since Alternative 1 would potentially increase the population of the County's Planning Area at buildout more than with the proposed Area Plan, impacts on solid waste at buildout of Alternative 1 would be greater than at buildout of the proposed Area Plan.

Electricity, Natural Gas and Telecommunications

The County's electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications needs at Area Plan buildout would be greater than those of the proposed project due to the potentially greater buildout population. Consequently, impacts on electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications would potentially be greater than those from the proposed project.

Noise

As described in **Section 3.2, Transportation and Circulation**, buildout of the existing County Area Plan and City General Plan would have a total of 1,487,994 ADTs. With buildout of the proposed Area Plan and the City's proposed General Plan, 3,288,386 ADTs would be generated, which would represent an approximate 3 percent increase (the proposed Area Plan has a greater amount of ADTs due to the increase in the total square feet of commercial land uses).

Therefore, Alternative 1 impacts on noise would be less than those of the proposed Area Plan.

Population and Housing

Buildout under Alternative 1 would have a greater population increase and a greater number of housing units as compared to the proposed project. The proposed project would account for 54 percent of the growth within the unincorporated North Los Angeles subregion. Alternative 1 would account for 65 percent of the growth within the unincorporated North Los Angeles subregion. Therefore, population growth in the unincorporated Santa Clarita Valley due to buildout of either the current Area Plan (Alternative 1) or the proposed Area Plan is consistent with overall growth anticipated by SCAG for the unincorporated North Los Angeles County subregion.

Implementation of Alternative 1 would not result in the displacement of substantial numbers of housing or people since several proposed policies promote growth and development within underutilized and vacant areas of the County's Planning Area. Implementation of Alternative 1 would have comparable impacts on population and housing as those of the proposed project.

Conclusion

As discussed above, under Alternative 1, the existing Area Plan would continue to be implemented and used for the guidance of growth throughout the County's Planning Area. Therefore, implementation of Alternative 1 would not achieve the following project objectives to the same degree as the proposed project:

4. Higher density development, including multi-family housing and mixed use projects that integrate housing with commercial uses, shall be targeted in areas adjacent to existing and planned transit

corridors, stations, and key activity centers, such as the Valencia Town Center and portions of Newhall and Soledad Canyon Road.

8. Development shall be located and designed to minimize the impact on the Valley topography, emphasizing the use of grading techniques for development pads that mimic the natural topography in lieu of repetitive flat pads to the extent feasible and consistent with a community's open space objectives.
11. New development shall be designed to improve energy efficiency, reducing energy and natural resource consumption by such techniques as the use of solar generators, recycling of treated wastewater, capture of storm runoff on-site, and use of recycled materials in building construction, native and drought-tolerant landscape, and energy and water efficient appliances and systems.
20. Housing developments located in the more urbanized communities of the Valley shall be designed to create a sense of neighborhood by
 - a. promoting walkability and containing places that serve as centers of activity and identity (schools, multi-purpose facilities, parks, convenience services, neighborhood commercial centers, etc.);
 - b. containing a mix of housing types, densities, and parcel sizes, avoiding large areas and an over-concentration of homogeneous density units;
 - c. minimizing the dependence on, prominence, and area dedicated to the automobile;
 - d. featuring architectural design treatments along all frontages of new housing to promote continuity of architectural scale and rhythm and avoid "blank walls"; and
 - e. including pedestrian linkages, landscaped parkways and green corridors, and separated trails (pedestrian, bicycle or equestrian) where appropriate and feasible.
23. Older commercial areas and corridors that are economically and/or physically obsolete or deteriorated, such as portions of Castaic, Val Verde, Newhall, Lyons Avenue, Sierra Highway, Main Street, Newhall Avenue, and Soledad Canyon Road, shall be redeveloped for commercial, mixed use, residential or other appropriate uses that complement and serve adjoining land uses and can be adequately supported by the market. Where appropriate, redeveloped uses and buildings shall reflect the area's important architectural and cultural history.
27. An integrated transit system shall serve the Valley (rail, bus, shuttle, other) offering convenient alternatives to the automobile, minimizing congestion and providing access to regional transportation systems, such as Metrolink.

The following objectives would partially meet the vision of the proposed project as relating to this alternative:

18. Multi-family housing developments shall contain adequate recreational and open space amenities on site and be designed to ensure a high quality living environment. Their architectural treatment and building massing shall complement the characteristics of surrounding single-family residential neighborhoods.

The impacts associated with continued use of the existing Area Plan would potentially result in comparable impacts as the proposed project and impacts could be potentially greater. Those impacts that were found to be similar to the proposed project are: agricultural resources, biological resources, water service, mineral resources, homelessness and emergency shelters, education, law enforcement, noise, and population and housing. With the implementation of Alternative 1, the following impacts were found to be greater than those of the proposed project: cultural resources, soils, geology, and seismicity; traffic, hydrology hazards and hazardous materials, seniors and youth, cultural amenities, libraries, health services, fire protection, parks and recreation, and electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications. Impacts on air quality, water service, global climate change, biological resources, solid waste, and noise sources would remain significant and unavoidable.

Alternative 2 – Preservation Corridor Alternative

This alternative would support the South Coast Missing Linkages wildlife corridor and the proposed SEAs by proposing a density reduction. The South Coast Wildlands is an organization that proposed a wildlife corridor between two separated parts of the Angeles National Forest.

Alternative 2 (Preservation Corridor) includes 5,967 acres that are generally conterminous with the wildlife corridor proposed by the South Coast Wildlands. Under the proposed Area Plan, 5,225 acres within the proposed Preservation Corridor are designated as Rural Land 2 (RL2). The RL 2 designation has a maximum allowable density of 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres, which would allow for a total of 2,613 dwelling units. The remaining 742 acres within the proposed Preservation Corridor are designated as Rural Land 5 (RL5) under the proposed Area Plan. The RL5 designation has a maximum allowable density of 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres, which would allow for a total of 148 dwelling units. Under Alternative 2, the 5,967 acres within the RL2 and RL5 land use designations would be redesignated as Rural Land 10 (RL10). The RL10 designation has a maximum allowable density of 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres. Therefore, a total of 597 dwelling units would be allowed on the 5,967.5 acres within the boundary of the proposed Preservation Corridor under Alternative 2, instead of a total of 2,761 dwelling units under the proposed Area Plan. Accordingly, this alternative would create more open space for wildlife movement (see **Figure 6.0-1, Preservation Corridor Alternative**). Policies would be developed to create minimal obstructions on these properties to allow for wildlife movement. This alternative would also support the SEAs proposed within this region.

Land Use

Buildout conditions under Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the proposed project, except that there would be a reduced density within the proposed Preservation Corridor, which includes the South Coast Missing Linkage (SCML). As seen in **Figure 6.0-1** the specific area of Alternative 2 would be located within the eastern portion of the County's Planning Area. The proposed project would be consistent with SCAG policies and other applicable area plans (i.e., the Air Quality Management Plan). Alternative 2 would redesignate land uses within the Preservation Corridor boundary from Rural Land 2 (RL 2, 1 du/2 ac) and Rural Land 5 (RL 5, 1 du/5 ac), to Rural Land 10 (RL 10, 1 du/10 ac). The change in land use designations would provide a buffer/transition between adjacent Open Space (OS), RL 10, and Rural Land 20 (RL 20) land use designations, potentially increasing potential wildlife movement. The number of dwelling units within the Preservation Corridor would potentially decrease from 2,761 du under the proposed Area Plan to 597 du on 5,967.50 acres under Alternative 2. Under Alternative 2, impacts on land use would be less than that of the proposed Area Plan.

Transportation and Circulation

Under this alternative traffic and circulation impacts would be less than those of the proposed project although there would be a potential reduction in the number of ADTs within the Preservation Corridor. As seen in **Figure 6.0-1**, the alternative would designate land uses that would reduce the allowable density within the SCML from 2,761 dwelling units to 597 dwelling units. **Table 6.0-2, Preservation Corridor Alternative Trip Generation Summary**, describes the difference in ADTs between the proposed Area Plan and Alternative 2.

Table 6.0-2
Preservation Corridor Alternative Trip Generation Summary

| | Land Use | Units | ADT |
|--|----------|--------------|-----------------|
| Proposed Area Plan | RL 2 | 2,613 | 25,866 |
| | RL 5 | 148 | 1,469 |
| Subtotal | | 2,761 | 27,335 |
| Buildout | | | 3,288,386 |
| Preservation Corridor Alternative | RL 10 | 597 | 5,908 |
| Subtotal | | 597 | 5,908 |
| Buildout | | | 3,266,959 |
| Difference | | 2,164 | (21,427) |

Source: Austin-Foust Associates, Inc., OVOV Alternative Trip Generation Summary, May 2009.

The proposed Area Plan and General Plan would generate a total of 3,288,386 ADTs at buildout. Under the proposed Area Plan, the area within Alternative 2 would generate 27,335 ADTs. Alternative 2 would generate 5,908 ADTs, approximately 21,427 less ADTs when compared to the proposed Area Plan and General Plan. Buildout under Alternative 2 would have approximately 0.7 percent less ADTs than the proposed Area Plan and General Plan. The projected amount of vehicle miles traveled is based on the average trip length (11.47 miles) and the average number of trips. The total vehicle miles traveled for Alternative 2 would be approximately 37,472,020 miles which would be 245,768 less miles traveled than the proposed Area Plan and General Plan (37,717,788 miles traveled). This would reduce the amount of vehicle miles traveled for this area of the County's Planning Area. Impacts on traffic and circulation would be greater under the proposed project compared with Alternative 2.

Air Quality

Since buildout under Alternative 2 would reduce density within the Preservation Corridor, there would be the potential for less vehicle emissions and operational emissions as compared to the buildout under the proposed project. As described above, there would be 21,427 less ADTs which would translate into 37,472,020 vehicle miles traveled (11.47 miles average trip length) or approximately 245,768 less total vehicle miles traveled (approximately 0.7 percent less than the proposed Area Plan and General Plan). Therefore, impacts on air quality would be less for the Preservation Corridor Alternative.

Global Climate Change

Since buildout under Alternative 2 would reduce density within the Preservation Corridor, there would be potential for fewer vehicle emissions and operational emissions. Impacts on global climate change would be less than the proposed project.

Agricultural Resources

Buildout conditions under Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the proposed Area Plan, except for the reduction in allowable density within the Preservation Corridor (**Figure 6.0-1**). As seen in **Figure 3.5-1, Farmland Designations within the OVOV Planning Area**, the only type of agricultural land near the Preservation Corridor boundary is prime farmland. This farmland is not located within the Preservation Corridor's boundary and impacts on agricultural resources would be similar to the proposed Area Plan.

Aesthetics

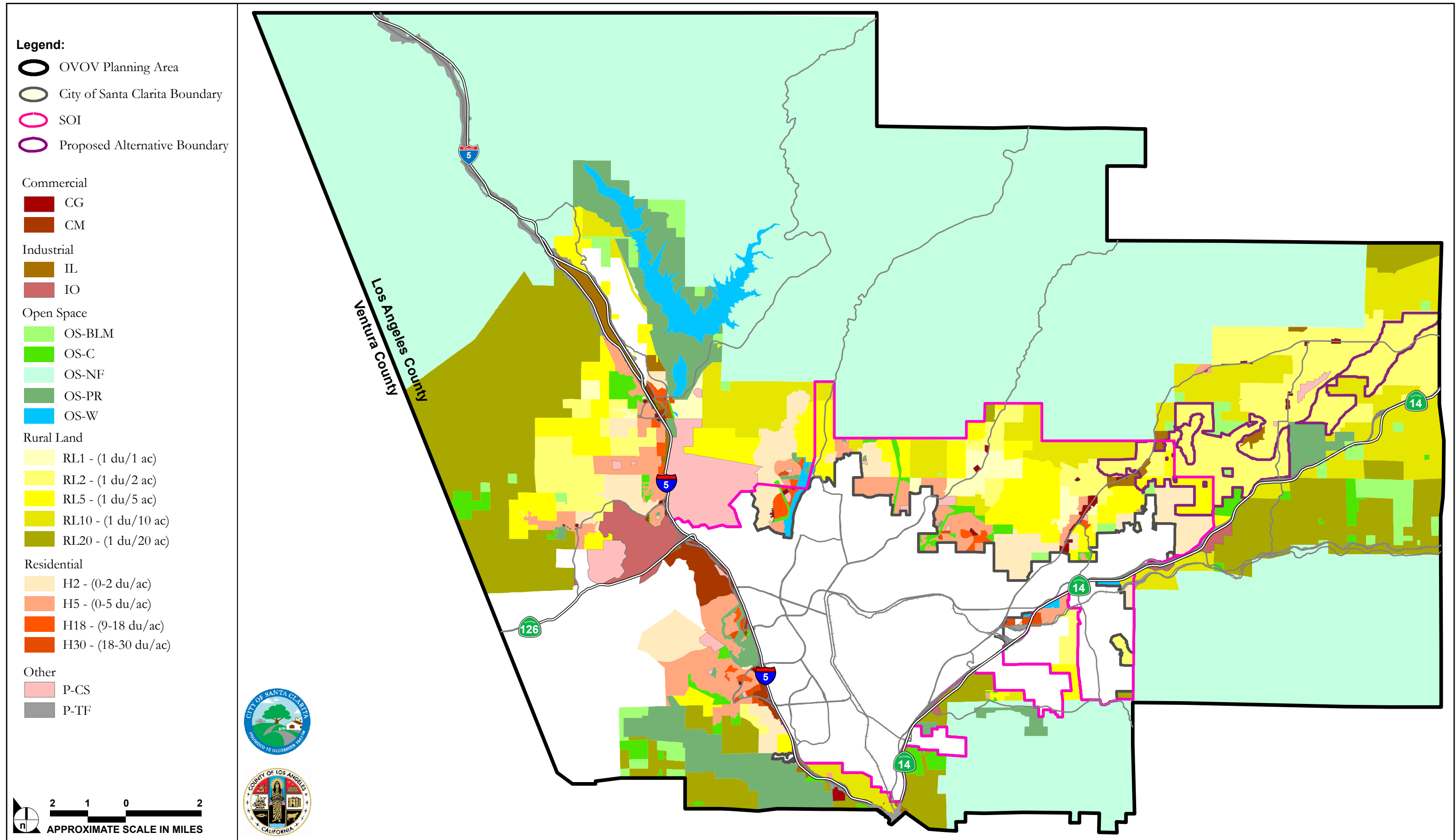
Buildout conditions under Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the proposed Area Plan, with the exception of land uses within the boundary of the Preservation Corridor. Since the change in rural land uses would decrease density and increase open space, impacts on aesthetics, views, and nighttime illumination under Alternative 2 would be less than those associated with the proposed Area Plan.

Biological Resources

Existing biological resources within the Preservation Corridor include coastal and desert scrub, chaparral, coast live oak woodland, coast live oak riparian forest, juniper woodland, southern sycamore-alder woodland, southern cottonwood-willow riparian woodland and forest, southern willow scrub, freshwater marsh, alluvial fan sage scrub, and native and annual grassland. These represent most of the major vegetation types found within the County's Planning Area, and provide habitat for the vast majority of animal and plant species that are expected to occur within the Santa Clarita Valley, excepting narrowly endemic taxa that would be dependent on rare landscape features such as vernal pools (e.g., fairy shrimp, Orcutt's grass, etc.).

Much of the proposed linkage is within the County-proposed Santa Clara River SEA, and includes portions of the Santa Clara River and Soledad Canyon, as well as several major northern tributaries—Mint, Tick, Tapie, Spring, Agua Dulce, Long, and Bobcat Canyons. Undeveloped portions of this area constitute the sole remaining linkage network connecting the San Gabriel and Liebre Mountains. Riparian corridors within these drainages provide linkage opportunities between populations of threatened and endangered native fish and amphibian species, including the Santa Ana sucker, unarmored threespine stickleback, arroyo chub, and arroyo toad. These habitats and associated upland surroundings also provide movement, forage, and breeding opportunities for western spadefoot and all of the other special status reptile, bird, and mammal species to be found within the Santa Clarita Valley.

As described in the description of Alternative 2, approximately 5,967.50 acres of RL 2 and RL 5 land uses would be re-designated as RL 10, thus reducing density within this area (see **Figure 6.0-1**). Alternative 2 would allow increased opportunity for a wildlife movement corridor between the two units of the National Forest in northeastern and southeastern portions of the County's Planning Area. This increased opportunity would potentially reduce impacts on wildlife movement to less than those of the proposed project. Therefore, impacts on wildlife movement through the County's Planning Area would be less than that of the proposed Area Plan. Impacts on biological resources would be less than those of the proposed Area Plan.



SOURCE: City of Santa Clarita, County of Los Angeles, Valleywide General Plan - November 2010

FIGURE 6.0-1

Preservation Corridor Alternative

Cultural Resources

Buildout conditions under Alternative 2 would be similar to those under the proposed Area Plan, except for the Preservation Corridor. Alternative 2 would reduce the potential to damage a historical, archaeological, or paleontological resource relative to the proposed project because of the reduced amount of construction. Impacts on cultural resources would potentially be less than those associated with the proposed project. However, cultural resource surveys would be conducted on a project by project basis and projects would be subject to CEQA review.

Geology, Soils, Seismicity

Buildout under Alternative 2 would be similar to that under the proposed project, except for the reduction in density in the northeast portion of the County's Planning Area. As seen in **Figure 3.9-3, Faults within or adjacent to the OVOV Planning Area**, the Alternative 2 Preservation Corridor boundary is located near known earthquake faults and would be subject to the same geologic conditions and hazards as the proposed project. However, Alternative 2 would not allow as much development, consequently reducing grading or excavation within the Preservation Corridor. As the alternative would reduce density within the Preservation Corridor, the potential to injury of people from earthquake hazards would be less than that of the proposed project. As Alternative 2 would allow less development, soils, geology, and seismic impacts would potentially be less than those associated with the proposed project.

Mineral Resources

As seen in **Figure 6.0-1**, Alternative 2 would designate the Preservation Corridor as less dense rural land. As Alternative 2 would potentially have less density than that of the proposed Area Plan, impacts on mineral resources would be less than the proposed Area Plan.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Alternative 2 would not substantially increase or decrease the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous substances relative to the proposed Area Plan. As emergency response plans are developed and adopted independently of the Area Plan and General Plan process, impacts on emergency preparedness and response would be comparable for Alternative 2 and the proposed project. Alternative 2 would support programs related to wildland fire, and fire hazard impacts would be comparable to the proposed project.

Hydrology and Water Quality

As the County's Planning Area reaches buildout, the amount of unpaved surface area would decrease with increased development and impervious surface area would increase due to the construction of more paved surfaces such as parking lots, streets, and sidewalks. As described in **Section 3.12, Hydrology and Water Quality**, existing and proposed development is subject to state and federal guidelines which regulate surface water quality and discharge, either through point sources or non-point sources. As the land uses in the Preservation Corridor would decrease in density under Alternative 2, the amount of potential hardscaped areas would decrease. The decrease in hardscaped areas, or increase in open space areas, would potentially have fewer impacts on hydrology. Therefore, Alternative 2 impacts on hydrology and water quality would be less than the proposed Area Plan.

Water Service

An adequate supply of water would be available to serve the portion of the OVOV Planning Area and within the CLWA service area boundary and the East Subbasin, and therefore, impacts would be less than significant. In areas outside the CLWA service area and the East Subbasin however, local groundwater supplies are not adequate to meet the needs of all existing residents due to the apparent overreliance on the groundwater deposits as evidenced by declining water levels and dry wells. Consequently, local supplies would not be able to meet the needs of OVOV buildout in this area and impacts would be significant after mitigation. Buildout under either the proposed project or Alternative 2 would be similar.

Community Services

Seniors and Youth

As the population of the County's Planning Area reaches buildout, the number of senior citizens would be expected to increase for both Alternative 2 and the proposed Area Plan. Alternative 2 would have a smaller population at buildout and potentially a smaller amount of seniors. The County would need to work with childcare facilities and providers to provide adequate services as the County's Planning Area reaches buildout. Park resources would need to meet the future demands of youth programs and youth sports. Impacts on youth and senior services under Alternative 2 would be potentially less than those of the proposed Area Plan due to the potentially smaller demand of services from the smaller population projection at buildout under Alternative 2.

Cultural Amenities

Alternative 2 cultural amenities would be similar to the proposed project. As there would be a decrease in the land use density of Alternative 2, there would potentially be a decrease in the buildout population. As the proposed buildout population would be smaller than the proposed project, impacts on cultural amenities would be less than the proposed project.

Homelessness and Emergency Shelters

Services such as the provision of emergency shelters and housing for the disadvantaged population would be established under both the proposed Area Plan and Alternative 2. However, Alternative 2 population at buildout would be smaller than buildout population under the proposed Area Plan. Therefore, impacts on community services would be less than the proposed project.

Public Services

Libraries

The buildout of Alternative 2 would reduce the projected amount of dwelling units of the proposed project by 2,164 dwelling units. This would be a reduction of approximately 7,055 residents within the County's Planning Area.⁴ With less population there would be less demand on library items and library space. As projected the proposed project would already have a surplus of library items and library space at buildout. Since Alternative 2's buildout population would be smaller than the proposed project buildout population, impacts on libraries and library service would be less than those associated with the proposed project.

Health Services

Under Alternative 2 the buildout population (230,322 residents) would potentially be less than the proposed Area Plan buildout population (237,387 residents) due to the reduced land use density within the Preservation Corridor. As the buildout population would potentially be less than that of the proposed Area Plan, Alternative 2 would have less impacts on health services at buildout of the County's Planning Area.

⁴ 3.26 persons per household was the figure used to calculate the approximate number of residents. This was determined by the dividing the 2008 population of the County's Planning Area and the 2008 number of dwelling units.

Education

Since the buildout population under Alternative 2 would be less than the buildout population under the proposed project, the County's education needs at Area Plan buildout would be less. Therefore, impacts on education would be less than those associated with the proposed project.

Fire Protection

The County's fire protection needs at Alternative 2 buildout would be less than the proposed project due to the potentially lower population at buildout. Therefore, impacts on fire protection would potentially be less with buildout of Alternative 2.

Police Protection

As described in **Section 3.15, Public Services**, the Sheriff's Department uses a standard guideline of providing at least 1 sworn officer per 1,000 residents. The current number of sworn officers, within the County's Planning Area is 171, which provides one officer per 439 residents. With buildout under Alternative 2, the number of officers required to maintain a standard of one officer per 1,000 residents would need to be 230 for the projected population of 230,322 residents, or an additional 59 sworn officers. The proposed Area Plan buildout population would be 237,387 residents and would therefore require 237 sworn officers, or an additional 66 sworn officers, to maintain standards. The proposed Area Plan would require an additional 7 sworn officers than Alternative 2. Therefore, Alternative 2 would have less impacts on police protection than those associated with the proposed Area Plan.

Parks and Recreation

Buildout conditions under Alternative 2 would require less parkland to meet the needs of the citizens of the County's Planning Area, per the Quimby Act. Under this alternative the estimated number of residents in the County's Planning Area would be 230,322. Therefore, 691 acres of parks would be needed to satisfy the Quimby Act requirement of 3 acres per 1,000 residents. The proposed project would require 711 acres of parkland. Therefore, impacts on recreation under Alternative 2 would be less than those associated with the proposed project.

Utilities and Infrastructure

Wastewater

The County's wastewater generation and treatment needs at Area Plan buildout would need to be evaluated on a project-by-project basis for their potential impact on the capacity and effectiveness of the wastewater treatment system to treat the potential additional sources of wastewater. Due to the potential for less demand under Alternative 2 on the wastewater treatment facility, impacts on wastewater would be less than those associated with the proposed project.

Solid Waste

Since the buildout population under Alternative 2 would be less than the buildout population under the proposed project, the County's solid waste generation and disposal needs at Area Plan buildout would potentially be less. As described above, the projected buildout generated waste under the proposed Area Plan would be 200,909.2 tons of solid waste per year (or 550.4 tons of solid waste per day). The population of the County's Planning Area would be 230,322 residents under buildout of Alternative 2. Using the same per capita waste generation for this alternative, the projected amount of waste disposal would be 194,929.8 tons per year (or 534.1 tons per day). Given the projected amount of landfill capacity needed for the County's Planning Area and the fact that nearby landfills are approaching full capacity, there would be a shortfall of capacity by 2014. Since Alternative 2 would generate less solid waste than that of the proposed project, impacts on solid waste would be less than those associated with the proposed project.

Electricity, Natural Gas and Telecommunications

Since the buildout population (230,322) under Alternative 2 would be less than that of the proposed Area Plan (237,387), the County's electricity, natural gas and telecommunications needs at Alternative 2 buildout would be less. Therefore, impacts on electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications would be less under Alternative 2 than those associated with the proposed project.

Noise

Under this alternative the noise impacts would reflect the construction impacts associated with the proposed project. Over the buildout of the County's Planning Area the only area that would have the potential for fewer impacts from noise and noise generating sources would be the northeast portion of the County's Planning Area. As seen in **Figure 6.0-1**, this area would have reduced density to potentially provide the opportunity for preservation of a wildlife corridor. The reduction in density would have the

potential for a reduction in the amount of noise generating sources. As with a reduction in density there would potentially be a reduction in the amount trips and vehicle miles traveled. As Alternative 2 would potentially have approximately 7,055 less residents, there would be a reduction in the noise from vehicles along major transportation routes (a reduction of 21,427 ADTs under Alternative 2). Therefore, noise impacts would be less than that of the proposed project.

Population and Housing

Under Alternative 2, the total number of potential new dwelling units within the County's Planning Area at Area Plan buildout would be reduced by 2,164 dwelling units. The potential buildout population for Alternative 2 would be 7,055 less residents than the proposed project. Since Alternative 2 reduces the number of potential dwelling units and the potential number of residents at buildout, impacts on housing and population under this alternative would be less than that of the proposed project.

Alternative 2 would not interfere with the County's ability to meet its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). The County is required by state law to provide an inventory of land suitable for residential development, including vacant sites and sites having the potential for redevelopment. This inventory is used to identify sites that can be feasibly developed for housing within the current planning period in order to meet the County's RHNA.

Conclusion

As discussed above, an Area Plan similar to the proposed Area Plan would be implemented under Alternative 2, except the RL 2 and RL 5 land use designations within the proposed Preservation Corridor's boundary would be changed to RL 10. Implementation of Alternative 2 would not achieve the following project objectives to the same degree as the proposed project:

14. Valley communities shall contain a mix of uses that support the basic needs of residents – places to live, shop, recreate, meet/socialize, and enjoy the environmental setting – that are appropriate and consistent with their community character. Regionally oriented uses that serve residents of the entire Valley or export goods and services may be concentrated in key business centers rather than uniformly dispersed throughout the Valley communities.

Potential environmental impacts would be reduced under Alternative 2 as compared to the proposed project. Those impacts would include: land use, traffic and circulation, air quality, global climate change, aesthetics, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, mineral resources, hydrology and water quality, water service, community and public services, parks and recreation, noise, and population and housing. The remaining resource areas would be comparable to the proposed project and include

impacts on agricultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, scenic highways, federally protected wetlands, local biologically protective policies and ordinances pertaining to SEAs, biological conflicts with local, regional, or state conservation plans, private airstrip safety hazards, and school enrollment capacities. Impacts that would remain significant and unavoidable would include: water service, utilities and infrastructure – solid waste and noise generated sources.

Alternative 3 – Transit Corridor/Increased Employment Opportunity Alternative

This alternative would create a mixed use transit corridor around Lang Station, a former train depot that could be restored as a Metrolink station. High density residential land use designations located next to a major transportation/transit corridor would support policies in Los Angeles County's adopted Housing Element and the vision created in the OVOV planning process. The types of development recommended for this area would be designed at an urban density and have a mix of commercial uses. The proposed Area Plan's land use designations within the boundaries of the Transit Corridor (Alternative 3) are Residential 2 (H2) and Rural Land 10 (RL10). There are 107 acres within the H2 designation, with a maximum allowable density of 2 dwelling units per acre, which would allow for a total of 215 dwelling units. There are 701 acres within the RL2 designation, with a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres, which would allow for a total of 70 dwelling units. Alternative 3 would change these land use designations to Residential 30 (H30) and Industrial Office (IO).

Under Alternative 3, 5,412 acres within the boundaries of the Transit Corridor would be designated as H30, with a maximum allowable density of 30 dwelling units per acre, which would allow for a total of 16,251 dwelling units, and 267 acres within the boundaries of the Transit Corridor would be designated as IO, which would allow for a business/office park (see **Figure 6.0-2, Transit Corridor/Increased Employment Opportunity Alternative**). This would create an employment center near the medium to high density multi-family housing within the Transit Corridor and give residents an opportunity to work and live in the Santa Clarita Valley.

Land Use

Alternative 3 would designate the areas around Lang Station as H30 and IO. The H30 land use designation would allow for medium to high density multi-family housing. The IO land use designation would allow for a variety of office, research and development, light assembly and fabrication, warehousing and distribution, and supportive commercial uses within an environment characterized by master-planned developments. High quality maintenance would be expected to provide enhanced

landscaping and outdoor amenities to create a campus-like setting, with no outdoor storage visible to the general public.

The proposed Area Plan designates the area around Lang Station, just south of the land use designation IO, as RL 10. The proposed Area Plan also designates the area east of the RL 10 designation as RL 1, RL 10, Transportation Facilities (P-TF), and Light Industrial (IL). Alternative 3 would increase the density around Lang Station, as compared to the proposed Area Plan. The alternative would be consistent with the proposed City of Santa Clarita land use designations to the north (Urban Residential 3, or UR3, which allows 11 du/ac and Community Commercial, CC) but it could potentially conflict with the City of Santa Clarita land use designations to the west (Urban Residential 1, or UR1, which allows 2 du/ac). These land uses designations would potentially conflict with an AQMP or congestion management plan (CMP), but would be consistent with SCAG policies to create livable workspace environments and walkable communities. Alternative 3 would have fewer impacts on land use as that of the proposed Area Plan.

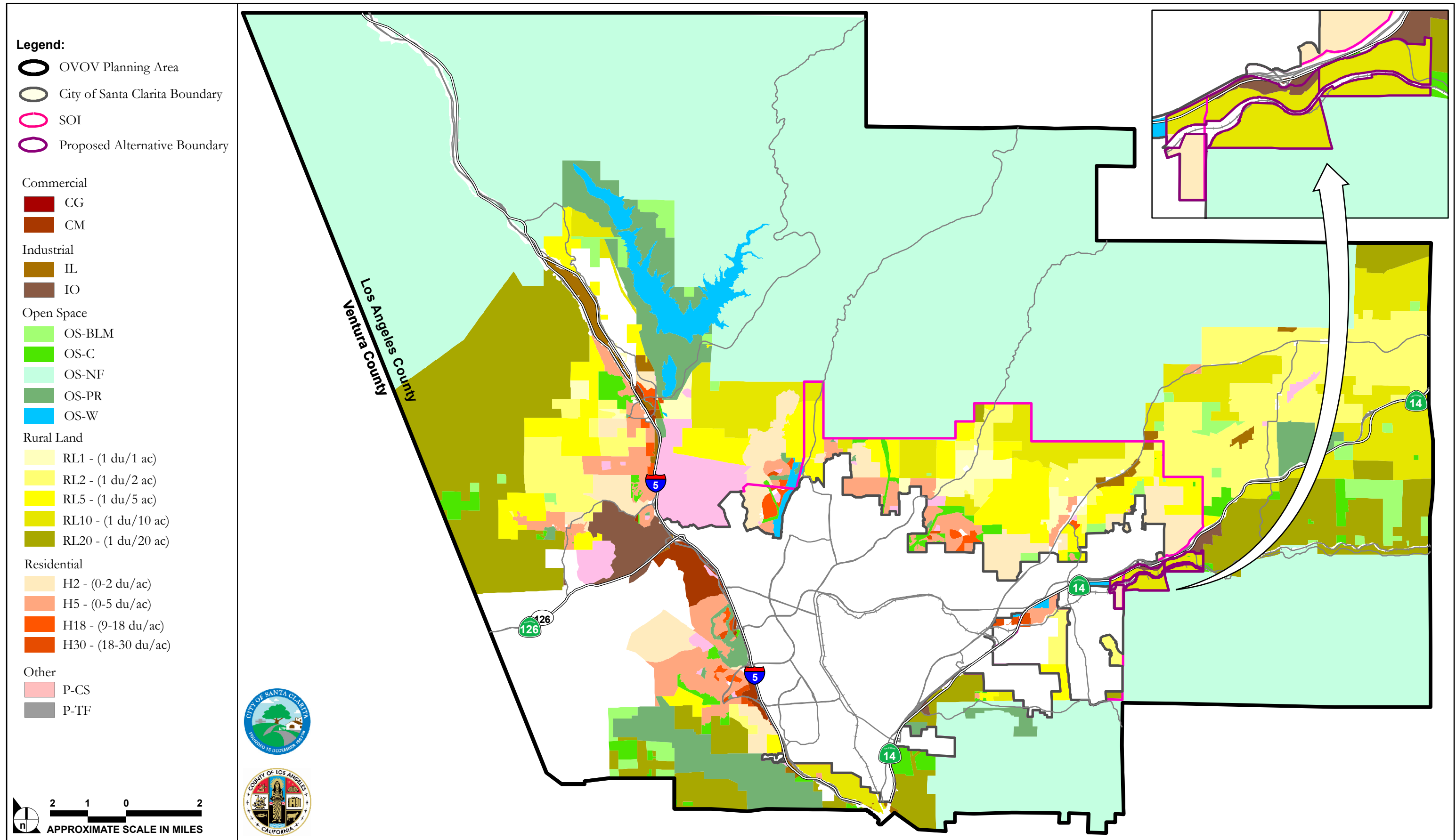
Transportation and Circulation

Under this alternative, traffic and circulation impacts would be similar to those of the proposed project. As seen in **Figure 6.0-2**, Alternative 3 would designate land uses that would increase the allowable density within the Transit Corridor boundary from 2,761 dwelling units to 16,251 dwelling units. **Table 6.0-3, Alternative 3 Trip Generation Summary**, describes the difference in ADTs between the proposed Area Plan and Alternative 3.

Table 6.0-3
Alternative 3 Trip Generation Summary

| | Land Use | Units | ADT |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------|----------------|
| Proposed Area Plan | H 2 | 215 | 2,129 |
| | RL 10 | 70 | 693 |
| Subtotal | | | 2,822 |
| Buildout | | | 3,288,386 |
| Alternative 3 | H 30 | 16,251 | 121,070 |
| | IO | 297 acres | 41,536 |
| Subtotal | | | 162,606 |
| Buildout | | | 3,448,170 |
| Difference | | | 159,784 |

Source: Austin-Foust Associates, Inc., OVOV Alternative Trip Generation Summary, May 2009.



SOURCE: City of Santa Clarita, County of Los Angeles, Valleywide General Plan - November 2010

FIGURE 6.0-2

Transit Corridor / Increased Employment Opportunity Alternative

The proposed Area Plan and General Plan would generate a total of 3,288,386 ADTs at buildout. Under the proposed Area Plan, the Transit Corridor area would generate 2,822 ADTs. Alternative 3 would generate 3,448,170 ADTs in the Transit Corridor area, approximately 159,784 more ADTs, or a 4.9 percent increase in ADTs, when compared to the proposed Area Plan and General Plan buildout. The total vehicle miles potentially traveled for Alternative 3 would be approximately 39,550,510 miles or 1,832,722 more miles traveled than the proposed Area Plan and General Plan. Impacts on traffic and circulation would be greater under Alternative 3 when compared to the proposed project.

Air Quality

There would be greater potential for more vehicle emissions and operational emissions under Alternative 3 compared to buildout under the proposed project. As described above there would be 159,784 more ADTs under Alternative 3.⁵ This would result in approximately 56 percent more vehicle miles traveled than with the proposed Area Plan and General Plan. Therefore, impacts on air quality would be greater for the Transit Corridor Alternative.

Global Climate Change

Since buildout under Alternative 3 would increase density within the Transit Corridor, there would be potential for more vehicle emissions and operational emissions. Impacts on global climate change would be greater than that of the proposed project.

Agricultural Resources

Buildout conditions under Alternative 3 would be similar to those under the proposed Area Plan, except for the increase in allowable density within the Transit Corridor (**Figure 6.0-2**). As seen in **Figure 3.5-1, Farmland Designations within the OVOV Planning Area**, the only type of agricultural land located to the east and northeast of the Transit Corridor boundary is prime farmland. This farmland is not located within the Transit Corridor's boundary and impacts on agricultural resources would be similar to the proposed Area Plan.

Aesthetics

Under Alternative 3, allowable density would be increased on vacant parcels designated as Rural Land by the proposed Area Plan. The overall acreage and distribution of developed land within the County's

⁵ The analysis included 39,550,510 vehicle miles traveled multiplied by 11.47 miles for an average trip length; or approximately 1,832,722 more total vehicle miles traveled.

Planning Area would not be altered. Mixed use and strictly commercial development projects do not possess substantially different visual qualities, impacts on aesthetics, views, and nighttime illumination. Under Alternative 3, impacts on aesthetics would be greater than those associated with the proposed Area Plan.

Biological Resources

Biological resources in the vicinity of Lang Station include upland areas dominated by coastal scrub, chaparral, and annual grassland vegetation, immediately adjacent to the Santa Clara River. Downstream (west) of Lang Station Road, the riverbed has been severely disturbed by sand and gravel mining activities, and noteworthy biological resources are limited to a perennialized flow channel that is constrained to the southern portion of the river flood plain. Upstream of Lang Station Road, the Santa Clara River has been largely undisturbed and maintains a natural flow. Currently, much of the floodplain east of Lang Station Road is largely bare of vegetation due to high-volume floods in 2005. Nevertheless, depending on the periodicity of flooding and the resultant maturity of vegetation within the floodplain, habitats in this section of the river and associated uplands are suitable for slender-horned spineflower, the undescribed species of everlasting reported from Newhall Ranch, white rabbit-tobacco, Mason's neststraw, Santa Ana sucker, unarmored threespine stickleback, arroyo chub, arroyo toad, western spadefoot, silvery legless lizard, coastal western whiptail, coast horned lizard, two-striped garter snake, southern California rufous-crowned sparrow, grasshopper sparrow, Bell's sage sparrow, California horned lark, loggerhead shrike, San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit, San Diego desert woodrat, southern grasshopper mouse, and American badger.

Impacts on biological resources under Alternative 3 would be greater than those associated with the proposed Area Plan.

Cultural Resources

Buildout conditions under Alternative 3 would be similar to those under the proposed Area Plan, except for the Transit Corridor. Alternative 3 would increase the potential to damage a historical, archaeological, or paleontological resources relative to the proposed project because of the increased amount of construction. Impacts on cultural resources would potentially be greater than those associated with the proposed project.

Geology, Soils, Seismicity

Buildout under Alternative 3 and the proposed project would be similar with the exception of the increased density in the eastern portion of the County's Planning Area. As seen in **Figure 3.9-3, Faults within or adjacent to the OVOV Planning Area**, the Alternative 3 Transit Corridor boundary is located near known earthquake faults and would be subject to the same geologic conditions and hazards as the proposed project. Alternative 3 would require additional grading and excavation within the Transit Corridor and would therefore potentially have more associated grading and excavation impacts. As the alternative would increase density within the Transit Corridor, the potential of injury to people from earthquake hazards would be greater than that of the proposed project. As Alternative 3 would allow more development, soils, geology, and seismic impacts would potentially be greater than those associated with the proposed project.

Mineral Resources

Development under this alternative would have impacts greater than under the proposed Area Plan.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Alternative 3 would not substantially increase or decrease the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous substances relative to the proposed Area Plan. As emergency response plans are developed and adopted independently of the Area Plan and General Plan process, impacts on emergency preparedness and response would be comparable for Alternative 3 and the proposed project. This alternative would support programs related to wildland fire, and fire hazard impacts would be similar to the proposed project.

Hydrology and Water Quality

As the County's Planning Area reaches buildout, the amount of unpaved surface area would decrease due to the construction of more paved surfaces such as parking lots, streets, and sidewalks. As described in **Section 3.12, Hydrology and Water Quality**, existing and proposed development is subject to state and federal guidelines which regulate surface water quality and discharge, either through point sources or non-point sources. Redesignation of land uses would have the greatest potential to affect water quality and hydrology. Alternative 3 would redesignate land uses within the Transit Corridor from Rural Land to Residential and Industrial Office. As the redesignation of land uses would increase allowable density, the amount of impervious surfaces would be greater. Therefore, impacts on hydrology and water quality within the Transit Corridor would be greater than those of the proposed Area Plan.

Water Service

An adequate supply of water would be available to serve the portion of the OVOV Planning Area and within the CLWA service area boundary and the East Subbasin, and therefore, impacts would be less than significant. In areas outside the CLWA service area and the East Subbasin however, local groundwater supplies are not adequate to meet the needs of all existing residents due to the apparent overreliance on the groundwater deposits as evidenced by declining water levels and dry wells. Consequently, local supplies would not be able to meet the needs of OVOV buildout in this area and impacts would be significant after mitigation. Buildout under either the proposed project or Alternative 3 would be similar. Since the buildout population under Alternative 3 (281,166) would be greater than the buildout population under the proposed Area Plan (237,387), the County's water supply needs at Area Plan buildout would be greater under this alternative.

Community Services

Seniors and Youth

Alternative 3 would have a larger population at buildout and a potentially larger group of seniors than the proposed project. The County would need to work with childcare facilities and providers to provide adequate services during buildout. Park resources would need to meet the future demands of youth programs and youth sports. Impacts on senior and youth services under Alternative 3 would be potentially greater than those of the proposed Area Plan due to the potentially greater demand for services resulting from a higher buildout population.

Cultural Amenities

The need for cultural amenities would be potentially greater for Alternative 3 than the proposed project. Since the land use changes would increase residential density, which would potentially increase population within the Transit Corridor boundary, impacts on cultural amenities would be greater than the proposed project.

Homelessness and Emergency Shelters

Services such as the provision of emergency shelters and housing for the disadvantaged population would be established under both the proposed Area Plan and Alternative 3. Therefore, impacts on community services would be similar to those associated with the proposed Area Plan. Both alternatives would adhere to the adopted County of Los Angeles Housing Element.

Public Services

Libraries

The buildout of Alternative 3 would increase the projected amount of dwelling units by 13,429 dwelling units as compared to the proposed project. This would be an increase of approximately 43,779 residents within the County's Planning Area.⁶ With a larger population there would be a greater demand on library items and library space. As described above, Alternative 3 would need 773,206 library items and 140,583 square feet of library space to meet the guidelines of 2.75 library items per resident and 0.5 square feet of library space per resident. The proposed project would need 652,814 library items and 118,694 square feet of library space at buildout. Therefore, since Alternative 3 would need more library items and library space than the proposed Area Plan, impacts on library services would be greater than the proposed Area Plan.

Health Services

Since the buildout population of Alternative 3 (281,166) would be potentially greater than the buildout population of the proposed Area Plan (237,387), the County's health and social services needs would be greater under Alternative 3. As of 2007, 10.2 percent of the population is age 65 or older. If trends continue, 43,300 people (15.4 percent of the population) would be age 65 or older at buildout of the Alternative 3, and 36,577 people (15.4 percent of the population) would be age 65 or older at buildout of the proposed Area Plan. Every age group of the projected population would require adequate health care within the County's Planning Area, not just newborns and the elderly. Therefore, impacts on health services would be greater under Alternative 3 than those of the proposed Area Plan.

Education

The County's education needs would be greater under Alternative 3 than under the proposed project because of the potentially greater buildout population with Alternative 3. As population increases there would be a potential for greater amounts of students. Therefore, impacts on education would be greater under Alternative 3.

⁶ 3.26 persons per household was the figure used to calculate the approximate number of residents. This was determined by the dividing the 2008 population of the County's Planning Area and the 2008 number of dwelling units.

Fire Protection

Since the buildout population under the proposed Area Plan would be less than that of the buildout population under Alternative 3, the County's fire protection needs at Alternative 3 buildout would be greater. This increase in population would potentially slow down the median emergency response time. Therefore, impacts on fire protection would potentially be greater with buildout of Alternative 3.

Police Protection

The current number of sworn officers, within the County's Planning Area is 171, which provides one officer per 439 residents. With buildout under Alternative 3, the number of officers required to maintain a standard of one officer per 1,000 residents would need to be 281 for the projected population of 281,166 residents, or an additional 110 sworn officers. The proposed Area Plan buildout population of 237,387 residents and would require 237 sworn officers, or an additional 66 sworn officers to maintain standards. Alternative 3 would require an additional 44 sworn officers than the proposed project. Therefore, Alternative 3 would have greater impacts on police protection than those associated with the proposed Area Plan.

Parks and Recreation

Buildout conditions under Alternative 3 would require more parkland to meet the needs of the citizens of the County's Planning Area, per the Quimby Act. Under this alternative, the estimated number of residents in the County's Planning Area would be 281,166. Therefore, 843 acres of parks would be needed to satisfy the Quimby Act requirement of 3 acres per 1,000 residents. The proposed project would require 711 acres of parkland. As Alternative 3 would require more parkland than the proposed project, impacts on parks and recreation under Alternative 3 would be greater than the proposed Area Plan.

Utilities and Infrastructure

Wastewater

The County's wastewater generation and treatment needs at Area Plan buildout would need to be evaluated on a project-by-project basis for their potential impact on the capacity and effectiveness of the wastewater treatment system to treat the potential additional sources of wastewater. Due to the potential for greater demand under Alternative 3 on existing and planned wastewater treatment facilities, impacts on wastewater would be greater than those associated with the proposed Area Plan.

Solid Waste

Since the buildout population under Alternative 3 would be greater than the buildout population under the proposed project, the County's solid waste generation and disposal needs at buildout of Alternative 3 would potentially be greater. As described above, the projected buildout generated waste under the proposed Area Plan would be 200,909.2 tons of solid waste per year (or 550.4 tons of solid waste per day). Alternative 3 estimates that buildout population of the County's Planning Area would be 281,166 residents. Using the same per capita waste generation number for this alternative the projected amount of waste disposal would be 237,960.9 tons of solid waste per year (or 651.9 tons of solid waste per day). Given the projected amount of landfill capacity needed for the County's Planning Area and the fact that nearby landfills are approaching full capacity, there would be a shortfall of capacity by 2014. Since the amount of waste disposed would be greater than the proposed project, impacts on solid waste would be greater under Alternative 3.

Electricity, Natural Gas and Telecommunications

The County's electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications needs at buildout of Alternative 3 would be greater than those of the proposed project due to the potentially greater buildout population. Consequently, impacts on electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications would potentially be greater when compared to those of the proposed project.

Noise

Under this alternative, the noise impacts would reflect the construction impacts associated with the proposed project. Under Alternative 3, the only area that would have the potential for greater impacts from noise and noise generating sources would be the Transit Corridor area of the County's Planning Area. As seen in **Figure 6.0-2**, this area would have increased residential density and more employment opportunities. The increase in density would have the potential for an increase in the amount of noise generating sources under this alternative. There would be a potential increase in the amount of vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled in accordance with the density increase. However, since Alternative 3 proposes residential and industrial office land use designations, there may be less vehicle miles traveled and fewer potential noise impacts because of the opportunity for walkable communities due to the proximity of transit. As buildout under Alternative 3 would potentially have approximately 43,779 more residents, there would be a potential increase in the noise from vehicles traveling along major transportation routes. Therefore, noise impacts would be less than the proposed project.

Population and Housing

Under Alternative 3, the total number of potential new housing units within the County's Planning Area at Area Plan buildout would be increased by 13,429 dwelling units. The proposed Area Plan designates land within the Transit Corridor as H2 (107 acres) and RL 10 (701 acres), which would allow for a potential total of 285 dwelling units. Alternative 3 would designate these lands as H30 (5,412 acres) and IO (267 acres) (see **Figure 6.0-2**), which would allow for a potential total of 16,251 dwelling units and an industrial office park. The estimated buildout population for the County's Planning Area under Alternative 3 would be 281,166 residents, while the estimated buildout population for the County's Planning Area under the proposed Area Plan would be 237,387 residents. Impacts on housing and population under this alternative would be greater than that of the proposed project due to the increase in potential dwelling units and the increase in projected population at buildout.

Conclusion

As discussed above, under Alternative 3, an Area Plan similar to the proposed Area Plan would be implemented, except for the increase in allowable development density that would be concentrated around Lang Station. As a result, new housing units and additional office and professional buildings would be developed within the County's Planning Area at Area Plan buildout. Therefore, implementation of Alternative 3 would not achieve the following project objectives to the same degree as the proposed Area Plan.

10. Biological resources in the designated Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) shall be protected through the siting and design of development to account for and be highly compatible with their resources. Specific development standards shall be identified to control the types of land use, density, building location and size, roadways and other infrastructure, landscape, drainage, and other elements to assure the protection of the critical and important plant and animal habitats of each SEA. In general, the principle shall be to minimize the intrusion and impacts of development in these areas with sufficient setbacks, or buffers, to adequately protect the resources.
20. Housing developments located in the more urbanized communities of the Valley shall be designed to create a sense of neighborhood by
 - b. containing a mix of housing types, densities, and parcel sizes, avoiding large areas and an over-concentration of homogeneous density units;

Under Alternative 3, impacts less than that of the proposed Area Plan would include: land use, agricultural resources, biological resources, hazards, and hazardous materials. Potential impacts determined to be greater under Alternative 3 compared to the proposed Area Plan include transportation and circulation, air quality, global climate change, hydrology and water quality, water service, community services (except homelessness and emergency shelters), public services, parks and recreation,

utilities and infrastructure—wastewater, population and housing, cultural resources, libraries, health services, education, fire services, aesthetics, and mineral resources. Impacts on biological resources, water service solid waste, and noise would remain significant and unavoidable.

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Table 6.0-4, Alternatives Analysis Comparison Summary, provides a comparison of the impacts associated with each project alternative relative to the proposed Area Plan. Where the project alternative would be environmentally superior (result in fewer impacts) to the proposed Area Plan, a plus (+) sign is shown; where the project alternative would result in impacts greater than those associated with the proposed Area Plan, a minus (–) sign is shown. For the instances when impacts are comparable (similar) for both the proposed Area Plan and the project alternative, an equals sign (=) is shown.

**Table 6.0-4
Alternatives Analysis Comparison Summary**

| Environmental Issue Area | Proposed Area Plan Impact (After Mitigation) | Alt. 1 – No Project | Alt. 2 – Preservation Corridor | Alt. 3 – Transit Corridor/ Increased Employment Opportunity |
|---|---|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Land Use | Less than Significant | - | + | = |
| Transportation and Circulation | Less than Significant | - | + | - |
| Air Quality | Less than Significant | = | + | - |
| Global Climate Change | Less than Significant | + | + | - |
| Agricultural Resources | Significant and Unavoidable | = | = | = |
| Aesthetics | Less than Significant | - | + | = |
| Biological Resources | Significant and Unavoidable | - | + | - |
| Cultural Resources | Less than Significant | + | + | - |
| Geology and Soils | Less than Significant | + | + | - |
| Mineral Resources | Less than Significant | = | + | - |
| Hazards and Hazardous Materials | Less than Significant | + | = | = |
| Hydrology and Water Quality | Less than Significant | + | + | - |
| Water Service | Less than Significant | - | + | - |
| Community Services – Seniors/Youth | Less than Significant | - | + | - |
| Community Services – Cultural Amenities | Less than Significant | - | + | - |
| Community Services – Homelessness/Emergency Shelters | Less than Significant | = | + | = |
| Public Services – Libraries | Less than Significant | - | + | - |

| Environmental Issue Area | Proposed Area Plan Impact (After Mitigation) | Alt. 1 – No Project | Alt. 2 – Preservation Corridor | Alt. 3 – Transit Corridor/ Increased Employment Opportunity |
|---|--|---------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Public Services – Health Services | Less than Significant | - | + | - |
| Public Services – Education | Less than Significant | = | + | - |
| Public Services - Fire Protection | Less than Significant | - | + | - |
| Public Services – Police Protection | Less than Significant | - | + | - |
| Parks and Recreation | Less than Significant | - | + | - |
| Utilities – Wastewater | Less than Significant | - | + | - |
| Utilities - Solid Waste | Significant and Unavoidable | - | + | - |
| Utilities – Energy/Natural Gas/Telecommunications | Less than Significant | - | + | - |
| Noise | Significant and Unavoidable | - | + | + |
| Population and Housing | Less than Significant | = | + | - |

ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

Section 15126.6(e)(2) of the *State CEQA Guidelines* indicates that an analysis of alternatives to the proposed project shall identify one alternative as the environmentally superior alternative. Furthermore, if the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project/No Development Alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative from among the other alternatives. For the proposed Area Plan, based on the analysis included herein, the Preservation Corridor Alternative would be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project because it would avoid and/or substantially reduce the severity of significant impacts associated with implementing the proposed project. As seen in **Table 6.0-4**, potential impacts were generally found to be less than that of the proposed project.

This alternative would reduce the severity of the significant and unavoidable biological impacts to less than significant. Alternative 2 would be consistent with the proposed SEA within the eastern portion of the County's Planning Area and within the SCML. Alternative 2 would provide additional potential for the movement of wildlife between the two units of the National Forest.

From an environmental perspective, this alternative is superior to the proposed project as it reduces the level of impacts associated with the proposed project. However, this alternative is rejected in favor of the proposed project because it does not meet as many of the objectives as the proposed project. For example, because this alternative would result in a reduced population and a decrease in the number of housing units, it would be less effective at achieving goals 14, 17, and 29 when compared to the proposed project.

7.0 UNAVOIDABLE SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As required by section 15126.2(b) of the *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines*, this section identifies the significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented. The *State CEQA Guidelines* require that this discussion

*Describe any significant impacts, including those which can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance. Where there are impacts that cannot be alleviated without imposing an alternative design, their implications and the reasons why the project is being proposed, notwithstanding their effect, should be described.*¹

The following impacts were found to be unavoidable and significant: air quality; global climate change; biological resources; water services; utilities and infrastructure – solid waste; and noise and vibration impacts.

SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

The following impacts have been identified in **Section 3.0** of this environmental impact report (EIR) as having significant and unavoidable impacts. The corresponding EIR section is listed for reference purposes.

Air Quality (Section 3.3)

While policies would reduce air pollutant emissions, the potential for impacts on air quality from implementation of the proposed Area Plan and the City of Santa Clarita's proposed General Plan would remain significant and unavoidable. Impacts would be considered potentially significant and mitigation measures are required. Nonetheless, even with mitigation, impacts to air quality are potentially significant and unavoidable.

Global Climate Change (Section 3.4)

Implementation of the proposed Area Plan and the City of Santa Clarita's proposed General Plan would increase greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions over existing conditions. While proposed Area Plan and General Plan policies would reduce GHG emissions, potential impacts on climate change from implementation of the proposed Area Plan and General Plan would be potentially significant and unavoidable after mitigation given the increase in emissions.

¹ California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, *California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines*, Section 15126.2(b).

Biological Resources (Section 3.7)

The proposed Area Plan policies do not provide a mechanism for the compensation of lost habitats when avoidance or minimization of impacts is considered to be infeasible, nor do they mitigate for the direct mortality of individuals of listed, proposed, or candidate species. In conjunction with the proposed Area Plan policies, mitigation measures **MM 3.7-1** through **3.7-3** are proposed to reduce these impacts. However, special-status species are dependent on a variety of habitat types, including non-sensitive annual grassland and various common scrub and chaparral types, and habitat loss of these types would therefore not be compensated for under **MM 3.7-3**. Thus, the conversion of all types of currently undeveloped wildlife habitat to Residential, Commercial and Industrial uses, as permitted under the Area Plan, would result in impacts on special-status species that would remain significant at the plan level.

The proposed Area Plan policies do not provide for the compensation of lost wildlife movement opportunities or nursery sites when avoidance or minimization of impacts is considered to be infeasible. Loss of connectivity between the two units of the Angeles National Forest could not be compensated for since the intervening habitats would be the only ones which could provide the necessary avenues of exchange. Therefore, this potential loss could not be adequately mitigated, and the impact of development would remain significant in the event that avoidance of impacts to habitat linkages arising from said development is considered infeasible.

Water Services (Section 3.13)

An adequate supply of water would be available to serve the portion of the OVOV Planning Area and within the CLWA service area boundary and the East Subbasin, and therefore, impacts would be less than significant. In areas outside the CLWA service area and the East Subbasin however, local groundwater supplies are not adequate to meet the needs of all existing residents due to the apparent overreliance on the groundwater deposits as evidenced by declining water levels and dry wells. Consequently, local supplies would not be able to meet the needs of OVOV buildout in this area and impacts would be significant after mitigation.

Utilities and Infrastructure – Solid Waste (Section 3.17)

The County's Planning Area uses three landfills within or near the OVOV Planning Area. They include the Chiquita Canyon Landfill, Antelope Valley Landfill, and the Sunshine Canyon Landfill. Landfills throughout the state have permitted maximum capacities (the amount of waste in tons or cubic yards a permitted facility is allowed to receive, handle, process, store or dispose of). The County does not have adopted solid waste disposal figures. However, since the County's Planning Area is adjacent to and surrounds the City's Planning Area, it would be reasonable to assume that solid waste disposal figures

for the County Area Plan would be similar to those for the City of Santa Clarita. Consequently, solid waste disposed figures used by the City of Santa Clarita are utilized for this analysis. In 2007, the amount of waste disposed by the City's Planning Area was 163,000 tons which would correlate to 48,512 tons of waste disposed for the County's Planning Area. The projected buildout amount of waste, generated by the County's Planning Area, would be 550.4 tons per day or 209,909.2 tons per year. Based on the 2008 Annual Report of the County of Los Angeles Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan a Disposal Capacity Shortfall is expected to occur beginning in 2014 at landfills in the County of Los Angeles. The shortfall in capacity is estimated to be at 1,172 tons per day (tpd) beginning in 2014 and estimated to increase to 11,665 tpd in the year 2023. Development of proposed expansions and exporting up to 10,000 tpd of solid waste out of the County would not be able to meet the daily disposal demand of the County. With implementation of the development in the OVOV County Planning Area, the estimated amount of solid waste that would be generated would contribute to the shortfall of capacity in the Los Angeles County landfill system. Therefore, the impacts from buildout to the solid waste system would be significant and unavoidable even with the implementation of **MM 3.17-1 to 3.17-5**.

Noise (Section 3.18)

The County of Los Angeles and City of Santa Clarita retained a noise consultant, Mestre Greve Associates, to conduct a noise study for the County's proposed Area Plan and the City's proposed General Plan. This study evaluated existing noise conditions throughout the OVOV Planning Area, and projected future noise levels based upon growth and traffic projections developed through the OVOV planning process.

Motor vehicles currently comprise the predominant noise source in the OVOV Planning Area. As development occurs within the OVOV Planning Area, significant construction noise would occasionally occur. Policies within the proposed Area Plan would not reduce operational noise impacts to less than significant; additionally, it is not always possible to reduce construction noise impacts to below standards set forth in the County's Noise Ordinance. Mitigation is recommended to reduce construction vibration impacts during pile driving by using cast-in-drilled-hole piles. Cast-in-place pile driving generally produces noise levels approximately 10 to 15 dB lower than pile driving. Construction noise impacts would, nonetheless, remain significant. Therefore, short-term construction noise impacts would be unavoidably significant for the duration of the construction activities. Short-term noise and vibration impacts from the pile driving would be unavoidably significant for the duration of the pile driving. While the County proposes noise policies to reduce impacts, operational noise impacts would exceed noise standards and would also be significant and unavoidable.

8.0 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 15126.2(c) of the *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines* states that use of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of a proposed project may be irreversible if a large commitment of these resources makes their removal, indirect removal, or non-use thereafter unlikely. This section of the environmental impact report (EIR) evaluates whether the proposed Area Plan would result in the irretrievable commitment of resources or cause irreversible changes in the environment. Also, in accordance with Section 15126.2 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*, this section identifies any irreversible damage that could result from environmental accidents associated with the proposed Area Plan. The following resource areas were found to have a significant and irreversible environmental change: the depletion of nonrenewable resources, change in the visual character of the region, and a small increase in local and regional vehicular traffic and the resultant increase in air pollutant emissions and noise generated by this traffic.

Irreversible Commitment of Resources

Buildout of the proposed Area Plan would contribute to the incremental depletion of resources, including renewable and nonrenewable resources. Resources such as lumber and other forest/agricultural products, as well as water (i.e., dust suppression), are generally considered renewable resources. Such resources would be replenished over the lifetime of the proposed Area Plan. For example, lumber supplies are increased as seedlings mature into trees, while water supplies are replenished as water is redistributed through the action of the hydrologic cycle. As such, implementation of the Area Plan would not result in the irreversible commitment of renewable resources. Nevertheless, there would be an incremental increase in the demand for renewable resources over the life of the proposed Area Plan.

Nonrenewable resources, such as natural gas, petroleum products, asphalt, petrochemical construction materials, steel and other metals, and sand and gravel, are considered to be commodities, which are available in a finite supply. The processes that created these resources occur over a long period. Therefore, the replacement of these resources would not occur over the life of the Area Plan buildout. To varying degrees, the aforementioned materials are all readily available and some materials, such as asphalt or sand and gravel, are abundant. Other commodities such as metals, natural gas, and petroleum products are also readily available but are finite in supply given the length of time required by the natural process to create them.

The demand for all such resources, both renewable and nonrenewable, is expected to increase regardless of whether the proposed Area Plan is implemented. According to the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) *Regional Growth Forecast 2005-2035*, the unincorporated population of the County of Los Angeles would more than double over the 30-year period between 2005 and 2035. This increase in population would result in the need for additional retail and commercial facilities. If not consumed by future projects, these nonrenewable resources would likely be committed to other residential, commercial, public service, or industrial projects in the region intended to meet this anticipated growth. Furthermore, the investment of resources in future projects would be typical of the level of investment normally required for retail and commercial uses of this scale. Provided that all standard building codes, including energy conservation standards, are followed, no wasteful use of energy or construction resources is anticipated.

Irreversible Environmental Changes

Irreversible long-term environmental changes associated with the proposed Area Plan would include a change in the visual character of the region, as a result of the conversion of undeveloped land to primarily residential and commercial land uses. Additional irreversible environmental changes would include a small increase in local and regional vehicular traffic, a resultant increase in air pollutant emissions, and noise generated by traffic and future development among other impacts. However, policies have been incorporated into the proposed Area Plan and mitigation measures are proposed in this EIR that would minimize or avoid potential significant effects of the environmental changes associated with the development of the County's Planning Area to the greatest degree feasible.

Potential Environmental Damage from Accidents

The County's Planning Area is located within a seismically active region and would be exposed to ground shaking during a seismic event. Conformance with the regulatory provisions of the County of Los Angeles and the Uniform Building Code criteria pertaining to construction standards would minimize damage to the extent feasible in the event of such an occurrence.

9.0 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sections 15126 (d) and 15126.2 (d) of the *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines* requires that an environmental impact report (EIR) include a discussion of the ways in which a project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Such a discussion should also identify any way in which a proposed project would remove obstacles to population growth, and discuss the characteristics of a project that may encourage and/or facilitate other activities that, either individually or cumulatively, could significantly affect the environment. CEQA emphasizes that growth in an area should not be considered beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance. The purpose of this discussion is to evaluate the growth-inducing potential of the County's proposed Area Plan. The proposed Area Plan provides the framework by which public officials will be guided on making decisions relative to development. The proposed Area Plan is consistent with regional and subregional planning policies of the South California Association of Governments (SCAG).

GROWTH-INDUCING POTENTIAL

In general terms, a project may foster population growth in a geographic area if it meets any of the criteria identified below:

- The project removes an impediment to growth, such as through the establishment of an essential public service, or the provision of new access to an area that will facilitate additional growth.
- The project results in the urbanization of land in a remote location that will induce the growth of the undeveloped areas between the project and existing developed areas, commonly referred to as "leap-frog development."
- Economic expansion or growth occurs in an area in response to the project, such as a substantial change in revenue base or expansion of employment.
- The project establishes a precedent setting action, such as approval of a general plan amendment or change in zoning that will serve as a precedent for other similar projects.

Should a project meet any one of these criteria, it may be considered growth inducing. An evaluation of the proposed Area Plan in relation to these criteria is provided in this section.

Removal of an Impediment to Growth

Growth in an area may occur as a direct result of the removal of physical impediments or restrictions to growth. In this context, physical growth impediments may include nonexistent or inadequate access to an area or the lack of sufficient essential public services, such as sewer and water service. The following discussion evaluates the effects of the proposed Area Plan with respect to this criterion.

Development pressures are a result of economic investment in a particular locality. These pressures help to structure the local politics of growth and the local jurisdiction's posture on growth management and land use policy. The land use policies established by the County's Area Plan will regulate growth in the County's Planning Area.

A project could indirectly induce growth by removing barriers to growth, by creating a condition that attracts additional population or new economic activity, or by providing a catalyst for future unrelated growth in the area. While a project may have a potential to induce growth, it does not automatically result in growth. Growth can only happen through capital investment in new economic opportunities by the public or private sectors.

Implementation of the Area Plan is intended to guide future growth of the County's Planning Area; particularly economic growth and the expansion of employment opportunities. The proposed Area Plan would allow the development of approximately 4,800 acres of commercial and industrial land uses.

Development permitted by the proposed land use policies would create more housing for all income levels. The proposed Area Plan allows for over 81,000 acres of residential land use, 4,800 acres of commercial and industrial land use. The allowable growth would account for an increase in the population of the County's Planning Area from 75,000 residents in the year 2008 to approximately 237,387 residents at buildout, for a net total of 162,387 additional residents. New residents would locate in the County's Planning Area because of expanded employment and housing opportunities in the One Valley One Vision (OVOV) Planning Area. The majority of new housing developments are anticipated to occur on a project specific basis. The County's Planning Area would be built out and encouraged by Area Plan land use policies that are not likely to remove obstacles to additional population growth.

Economic Growth

Development of the County's Planning Area as proposed would provide short-term construction jobs and create long-term commercial and industrial employment that would support both the local and regional population. Because future development in the County's Planning Area is anticipated to proceed

incrementally over many years, the total increased labor force needed to help support development, for short-term construction as well as long-term employment, would not be significant. The increase in labor force is expected to come from both the County's Planning Area and the City's Planning Area.

In the short term, the implementation of the proposed Area Plan may induce growth by introducing construction employment opportunities associated with the development of the new facilities. It is assumed that some of these temporary employment opportunities could result in people moving into the County's Planning Area. The chance of this occurring given the current state of the construction profession and slowdown in work is not likely since jobs could probably be provided to persons already located within the County's Planning Area. Nevertheless, the potential introduction of some construction workers into the County's Planning Area would not result in a significant increase in the local population and is not considered to be growth inducing.

Long-term growth would primarily be in the form of an economic response to the increased employment opportunities that would occur within the County's Planning Area. According to Southern California Association of Government's (SCAG's) Growth Forecast, the population of the entire unincorporated Los Angeles County subregion is expected to grow from 132,797 residents in the year 2005 to 434,773 residents in the year 2035; the number of occupied housing units is expected to increase from 39,331 units in the year 2005 to 129,981 units in the year 2035; and employment in the unincorporated subregion is expected to increase from 34,592 jobs in the year 2005 to 85,289 jobs in the year 2035. This growth represents more than a doubling in population and housing, and a 150 percent increase in employment, over the 30-year period.

Precedent Setting Action

The proposed Area Plan incorporates policies that would ensure that buildout of the County's Planning Area does not physically divide an existing community. SCAG is the regional planning authority for the Southern California Region. The proposed Area Plan and Land Use Map would be consistent with SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan Policies and Compass/Growth Visioning Principles. The proposed Area Plan and Land Use Policy Map would ensure that habitat conservation plans and natural community conservation plans are not impacted within the County's Planning Area. The proposed Area Plan's policies protect and designate areas of natural environmental importance, such as the Santa Clara River floodplain, local Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs), rivers, streams, and associated tributaries throughout the County's Planning Area as Open Space or Rural Land designations. Therefore, the County's proposed Area Plan would not be a precedent-setting action.

Development of an Isolated Area

Development can be considered growth inducing when it is not contiguous to existing urban development and “leaps” over open space areas. The proposed Area Plan designates land uses that include residential, non-residential, and open space. The County’s Planning Area consists of National forest lands, unincorporated County lands, and developed residential, commercial, and light industrial land uses. The proposed Area Plan incorporates policies that will ensure that buildout of the County’s Planning Area does not physically divide an existing community. The proposed Area Plan would encourage Transit Oriented Development (TOD), thereby promoting compact, walkable communities centered around high-quality train and transit systems, which, in turn, would reduce residents’ dependence on the automobile. Therefore, buildout of the proposed Area Plan would not result in the development of isolated areas.

CONCLUSION

The existing Area Plan and the proposed Area Plan would result in growth. Based on the definition of growth inducement, an Area Plan is inherently growth inducing. The existing and proposed Area Plans provide the framework by which public officials will be guided in making decisions relative to development within the County’s Planning Area. However, it is the implementation of land use policies that will incrementally increase demands for public services, utilities, and infrastructure, and the need for medical, educational, and recreation facilities. As described in **Section 6.0, Alternatives**, both the existing and proposed Area Plans are consistent with regional and subregional planning policies of SCAG. Although the proposed Area Plan supports continued growth of the County’s Planning Area, it does not induce growth over amounts already established by the existing Area Plan and the regional and subregional planning policies.

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